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THE TIMES

No. 65,421

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 10 1995

Prosecution warning to abattoirs

Tighter curb ordered on BSE cattle

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

SLAUGHTERMEN were summoned to the Ministry of Agriculture yesterday to answer fears that offal from cattle with "mad cow" disease is still finding its way into animal and human food.

Douglas Hogg, Minister of Agriculture, called on leaders of the slaughterhouse industry to tighten enforcement of new controls on the disposal of offal that were introduced three months ago. The move comes after Mr Hogg's disclosure last month that government veterinary surgeons had discovered four cases of slaughterhouses failing to remove spinal cord, one of the prohibited offals, from cattle carcasses.

Cattle exhibiting symptoms of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), which include a staggering gait and loss of limb control, have to be slaughtered and incinerated. Farmers are compensated with a payment of about £600 for every animal they have to kill. At the peak of the epidemic, more than 30,000 animals were being destroyed a year at a cost to the taxpayer of about £18 million.

Mr Hogg said last night of his meeting: "I expressed my concern that a number of failings had been found in the handling of specified bovine offals. Where sufficient evidence is available, prosecution will be taken, and prosecution is already under consideration in some cases."

Peter Scott, general secretary of the Federation of Fresh Meat Wholesalers, which represents slaughterhouse owners, said: "It is extremely important that this disease is eradicated from the cattle herd. Although new cases are down, there is an awful feeling that the decline may be plateauing out."

"If there is a loophole anywhere in the system, allowing offals to get back into animal



Hogg issued warning on public health

feed, the disease is not going to go away as quickly as we all hope."

Although the number of (mainly dairy) cattle dying from BSE is 45 per cent lower than last year, there are still up to 300 suspected new cases a week. Of the more than 155,000 cattle that have died from BSE since 1986, about 20,000 were born after July 1988, when the use of animal feed containing the remains of sheep and/or cattle was banned. BSE is thought to have been caused by cattle feed infected with scrapie, the equivalent disease in sheep.

Mr Scott said: "The main explanation offered for the BSE cases in cattle born after the feed ban is that some supplies of the feed continued in circulation for a while. But we cannot go on using that explanation for ever. If there is a loophole in the disposal of offal, we will never get rid of the disease."

Slaughterhouse operators are required to remove and destroy the brain, spinal cord, spleen, thymus, tonsils and intestines from all cattle they slaughter. Those are the only organs thought capable of carrying BSE.

The regulations were tightened in August to reduce the risk of the prohibited offals

being mixed with usable parts of the carcass. Among other things, the offals must now be stained with a dye to make their identification easier. Slaughterhouse owners estimate that the move has increased their costs by an average of £7 for every animal they handle. They are threatening to pass half the increase to farmers in the form of a levy of £3.50 for every head of cattle they slaughter.

Some scientists believe that the incidence of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD), a degenerative fatal brain disease in humans, is linked to BSE. The incidence of CJD in Britain doubled between 1985 and last year, although *The Times* disclosed yesterday that the number of referrals to the Government-funded project monitoring the disease is expected to fall this year.

Dr Robert Will, a consultant neurologist who runs the Government's CJD Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh, said that his team's examination of 600 cases had found no evidence of a link. However, because the incubation time of the disease can be up to 30 years, another ten to 15 years of surveillance was needed.

The evidence that some slaughterhouses are not carrying out the removal of prohibited offals properly could reawaken fears abroad about the safety of British beef.

Germany has long campaigned for tougher controls on the import of beef from Britain. Although Germany itself imports negligible quantities, other countries in the European Union, notably France, buy substantial quantities of British beef. The Germans agreed last year to lift a threat of a unilateral ban on British beef in return for assurances that none would be exported from herds with a case of BSE in the past six years.



The Queen Mother yesterday at the Field of Remembrance service, her first public appearance in months

The Queen Mother remembers

By ALAN HAMILTON

QUEEN Elizabeth The Queen Mother made her first public appearance for several months yesterday when she joined 5,000 war veterans at the annual Field of Remembrance service in the precincts of Westminster Abbey.

In the first of this year's official commemoration ceremonies, made more poignant by the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, she was joined by the Duke of York, who has given his personal support to the Royal British Legion's campaign for a nationwide obser-

ance of two minutes' silence on Saturday, the 77th anniversary of the armistice that ended the First World War.

The Queen Mother, who was 95 in August, was leaning on sticks and was greeted at the ceremony by Sarah Jones, the widow of Colonel 'H' Jones who won a posthumous VC in the Falklands campaign. Dressed in black, and carrying a sprig of rosemary for remembrance, the Queen Mother rode her battery-driven golf buggy to tour the abbey lawn, planted with thousands of individual wooden crosses

with poppies. She spent an hour at the ceremony, and tirelessly shook hands and chatted with the old soldiers.

She briefly stood to hear Mrs Jones read the lines of Lawrence Binyon that appear on every war memorial, and to observe the two minutes' silence. As she stepped forward to plant her own cross she was steadied by the Very Rev Michael Mayne, Dean of Westminster, who took her left arm. She had difficulty in bending down and the Duke of York, in naval uniform, placed it in the ground for her.

Officials of the legion attending the ceremony said that they had many hundreds of pledges of support for their campaign to observe the traditional two-minute silence on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month.

Britain leading drive to suspend Nigeria

By NICHOLAS WOOD IN AUCKLAND AND TUNKU VARADARAJAN

BRITAIN was last night leading a campaign to have Nigeria suspended from the Commonwealth after the country's military regime confirmed the death sentence on nine of its opponents.

Commonwealth heads of government are sharply divided on the issue and John Major last night found himself in the unlikely company of President Mugabe of Zimbabwe, while President Mandela of South Africa is taking a soft line in urging continued dialogue with the Government of General Sani Abacha.

Senior British officials in Auckland for today's opening of the Commonwealth Conference indicated that the Prime Minister was hardening his stance on human rights abuses by countries belonging to the 52-nation organisation. Yet, unlike the United Nations and other international organisations, the Commonwealth has no legal mechanism to expel member states whose behaviour is judged by the majority to be "errant".

Two previous departures from the Commonwealth for "bad behaviour", those of South Africa and Pakistan, were voluntary, while Fiji was told that its membership had lapsed when it declared a republic after two military coups.

Legal experts believe that the only way in which Nigeria might have been prevented from attending the summit would have been for Chief Eneke Anyaoku, the Commonwealth Secretary-General and himself a Nigerian, not to have posted an invitation to General Abacha.

Nigeria's human rights Continued on page 2, col 5

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BR's train fleet is sold off for £1.8bn

By JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Rail's ageing fleet of 11,000 passenger trains has been sold by the Government for £1.8 billion in the biggest and most ambitious deal yet under rail privatisation.

The trains are being acquired by three companies including one backed by Japan's largest investment bank, Nomura. They will lease the trains, the oldest of which date from the late 1930s, back to the private companies taking over BR services from next year.

The deal was hailed by the Government as final proof that rail privatisation, by far

the most complex and least popular sell-off, remains on track despite the barrage of criticism it has attracted.

"It is clear evidence that the Government's plans for renewal of the country's rail industry are drawing wide support from the business community," said Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary.

Labour attacked the deal, which values the trains at an average of £250,000 each, as a rip-off for taxpayers that created "a cosy monopoly" for the winning bidders.

Brian Wilson, the Shadow Transport Secretary, said it was deplorable that the three leasing companies were being sold for less than the estimated £3 billion asset value given by John MacGregor, the then Transport Secretary, two years ago.

"Labour will bring these companies under the control of the rail regulator to guarantee that the desperately needed investment in rolling stock is actually delivered," he said. However, City and industry Continued on page 2, col 6

SATURDAY IN THE TIMES



MAGAZINE
The Beatles yesterday and today

WEEKEND
Win a £5,000 Mediterranean cruise

1015
The magazine for young Times readers

CAR 95
Win a £2,000 makeover for your car

WEEKEND MONEY
Customer's guide to British Gas

VISION
The seven-day TV and radio guide

Education

How a system of rewards improves classroom behaviour; homework and long-suffering parents.... Page 39

Refs sent off for help with stress

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

FOOTBALL'S leading referees are to be taught a difficult lesson this weekend: how to cope with hostile crowds and some of the world's biggest egos.

The 19 men responsible for policing players in the Carling Premiership, like Vinny Jones and Eric Cantona, will be recruited to the seclusion of a hotel in Sutton Coldfield for stress counselling by a "personal development consultant".

The part-time guardians of football's rules are paid £325 a match, plus tea and biscuits. But they have to put up with abuse, difficult decisions often second-guessed by the television cameras, and the volatile talents of players, many in their teens, earning £10,000-a-week.

The seminar, paid for by the Premiership, is being run by professional ego masseur Steve Minshull, the son of former Liverpool and Southampton goalkeeper Ray Minshull, who is more used to energising jaded businessmen. Mr Minshull's audience will include Paul Alcock, 42, the Redhill referee who sent off the Wimbledon player



Vinny Jones: hard man to keep an eye on

Vinny Jones during a match on Monday. Mr Alcock said: "I don't feel stressed on match days... but we can learn from anything."

Gerald Ashby, who refereed last season's FA Cup Final, has seen the pressure get through to some colleagues - "they keep wanting to go to the toilet".

If they have any doubts about the purpose of the session, the 19 might remember that when Maradona returned home two years ago, all Argentina's referees were advised to seek psychiatric assistance by the country's football association.

French ship protest fears

A big police security operation is being launched to protect eight French naval vessels against anti-nuclear protests when they dock in London today.

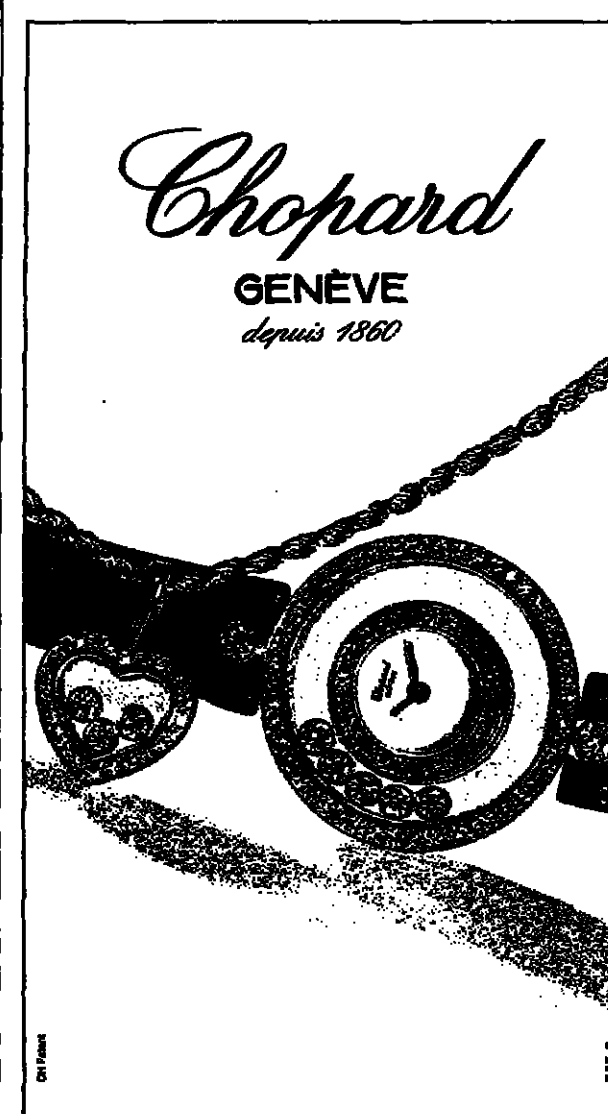
The visit is the first by the French navy to London since the restart of nuclear bomb tests by the French in the South Pacific. Police believe that demonstrators might try to stop the ships coming up the Thames.

They fear the ships, which include a minesweeper, two patrol boats and five smaller vessels, could be stopped with nets or inflatable dinghies.

Rabin killing 'part of plot'

The killing of Yitzhak Rabin was part of an extreme right-wing Jewish plot to sabotage the Middle East peace process, Israeli security sources said yesterday. The plot, they said, had the backing of radical rabbis from the occupied West Bank.

Two of the plotters were said to be members of Israel's crack Golani infantry brigade. By last night five alleged militants, in addition to the self-confessed assassin, Yigal Amir, a 25-year-old law student, were under arrest. Page 13



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British Gas drops Charter Mark as complaints increase

By ROSS TIEMAN
AND CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

BRITISH GAS yesterday became the first organisation to withdraw from the Government's Charter Mark scheme after complaints reached record levels.

Cedric Brown, the company's chief executive, said it was no longer appropriate for British Gas to hold an award because it was dividing its United Kingdom activities into four separate businesses to prepare for competition. Individual businesses would decide whether to reapply.

Roger Freeman, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Cabinet Office minister in charge of the scheme, suggested that British Gas had realised the approval might not be renewed. "We did tell British Gas in April that if service to the customer did not improve then we'd review whether the Charter Mark would be renewed," Mr Freeman said.

Although a programme of improvements was agreed earlier this year, customer dissatisfaction has remained high. The Gas Consumers'



Brown declined to repeat public apology

Council said difficulties had arisen as British Gas had separated TransCo, its pipelines business, from activities that dealt directly with customers such as Public Gas Supply and British Gas Service, which looked after heating appliances.

Complaints to the council reached 24,999 in the first half of this year, compared with 24,359 in the whole of last year. In spite of evidence from

the council that many of the company's 18 million customers remain deeply unhappy with its performance, Mr Brown declined to repeat his public apology to them issued in September.

"I expressed apologies to our customers a few months ago and I don't think things are going to get worse," he said. "We are now well through with the restructuring and it is not fully complete yet. It will take a few more months."

A British Gas spokeswoman acknowledged that the company had failed to maintain service standards. But she said the reorganisation was imperative if British Gas was to be able to prevent the wholesale loss of customers when competition trials began next spring. From April, 300,000 families in the West Country will be able to buy gas from at least five rival licensed suppliers, offering prices as much as 15 per cent below those of British Gas.

The company's decision to withdraw from the Charter Mark scheme was welcomed by Mr Freeman as evidence that the scheme, a pet project of the Prime Minister, was a real indicator of quality.

Charter Marks are the Oscars of the public services, a mark of excellence of service and an official seal of approval. To date a mark has not been withdrawn from an organisation although the Government has the facility to rescind the award at any time during its three-year lifespan.

This year saw a record number of applicants for the mark, established three years ago. Some 737 public-service organisations have submitted their case to the Government but only 227 public services carry the mark at present.

The marks can be held for three years, after which the organisations must reapply. Applications are judged by the Prime Minister's Advisory Panel on the Citizen's Charter and supervised by independent consultants in a process that takes about four months. Holders include the National Rivers Authority, British Waterways, Victoria Coach Station, the Imperial War Museum and the Royal Parks.

Dr Charles Goodhart, a fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, did not deny that mankind originated in Africa, but he believes that many of the changes that led to *Homo sapiens* took place 100,000 years ago in northern latitudes. He told the Linnean Society in London that the loss of body hair had never



Goodhart: modern man evolved from northerners who liked smooth women

Challenge of the pale skins in new evolution debate

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

MODERN humans are descended from a pale-skinned northern tribe and not the hairy Africans of legend, it was claimed yesterday.

Dr Charles Goodhart, a fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, did not deny that mankind originated in Africa, but he believes that many of the changes that led to *Homo sapiens* took place 100,000 years ago in northern latitudes. He told the Linnean Society in London that the loss of body hair had never

been explained: most tropical mammals, including the primates, functioned well with thick fur coats.

He favoured Darwin's explanation, that the change was brought about by sexual selection by males who preferred their mates to have furless bodies. The effect of this selection was partially transferred to men.

Dr Dr Goodhart rejects the conventional view that *Homo sapiens* was black. He believes that darker skin

evolved only after the light-skinned people were forced to migrate south again at the start of the last Ice Age, 70,000 years ago. There are four biochemically different forms of dark pigmentation in different populations, he said, which would not be the case if modern man had been black from the beginning.

More likely, he said, the naked *Homo sapiens* migrated south and different pigmentation developed in different regions.

New laws may force MPs into line on Nolan

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY

TORY MPs who are threatening to defy rules on disclosing outside earnings were warned yesterday that new laws could be drafted to force them into line.

Lord Nolan, whose public standards committee called for disclosure of earnings, will re-examine MPs' conduct next year to decide whether tougher measures are needed to enforce the reforms.

Several Conservative MPs, led by Sir Michael Neuber, have indicated that they may refuse to give details of earnings from work related to parliamentary duties. Sir Michael, MP for Romford and a former minister, said the rules approved by the Commons on Monday were not "the law of the land" and he could not be forced to follow them.

Other Conservative MPs have cited the example of Enoch Powell, who consistently refused, without punishment, to follow Commons regulations requiring MPs to give details of outside work.

But Lord Nolan made clear yesterday that his committee was prepared to consider recommending tougher sanctions, as called for by several witnesses who gave evidence to the six-month inquiry.

"We felt that a statutory regime should be held in reserve and not employed as a first step," he said. "This would have very major and many very undesirable constitutional implications so we took the view that the House would be able to police itself and enjoin its members to obey the rules."

Lord Nolan was "very hopeful" that MPs would toe the new line. John Major and Michael Heseltine have urged for MPs to obey the letter and the spirit of the new rules.

Any recommendation from the Nolan committee for a statutory regime would have no prospect of being implemented before the next general election. The committee is unlikely to publish its review of the changes until next November, at most five months before the election. However, the Nolan committee's standing has been strengthened by having the thrust of its initial recommendations implemented by the Commons.

In his first public response to Monday's Commons decision, Lord Nolan said: "Some of the issues are difficult, as the arguments over the best way forward have shown. It is quite likely that the process of implementation will give rise to further questions."

Letters, page 21

Levitt's lawyer cleared by Bar

JONATHAN GOLDBERG, QC, who defended Roger Levitt, the disgraced financier, has been cleared of misconduct in what has become one of the most acrimonious disputes at the Bar. (Frances Gibb writes.)

Mr Goldberg was reported to the Bar Council for speeches at the trial which prompted a rebuke from Mr Justice Laws. He accused Mr Goldberg of misleading the jury over how Mr Levitt came by his money. But this week, nearly two years after the trial in which Levitt was sentenced to 180 hours' community service for fraud, Mr Goldberg was cleared by a disciplinary tribunal and awarded costs.

Workers taken ill

The Health and Safety Executive is investigating a mysterious chemical reaction which has affected nearly 60 workers at the Dalks Simpson clothing factory in Larkhall, Strathclyde. Most of the workers had to be treated in hospital for breathing problems, dizziness and rashes.

Bomb remand

A 26-year-old Algerian facing extradition to France for conspiracy to cause an explosion was remanded in custody for a week at Bow Street Magistrates' Court, central London. Rachid Ramda, unemployed and of no fixed address, said nothing at the five-minute hearing.

Le Shuttle fares

Eurotunnel announced next year's fares for Le Shuttle Channel Tunnel car trains. Prices will start at £39 for a car on a day trip, with a five-day return Apex fare of £65. The highest return fare will be £328. Eurotunnel recorded a 14 per cent increase in traffic last month.

In for a penny

Customers at Harrods will soon have to pay £1 to use the lavatory. The across-the-board charge will come into effect early next year. Account customers, parents with babies, expectant mothers, the disabled and diners in the store's restaurants will be exempt from the charge.

Nelson sale

A letter revealing a harsh side to Nelson's character fetched £8,250 at auction at Phillips in London yesterday. Three days before leaving home for death and glory at Trafalgar in 1805, Nelson penned the curt, dismissive reference about his sailor-servant Tom Allen.

Christmas party for pensioners dropped

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

BRITISH GAS defended its decision to cancel its annual Christmas party for retired London workers last night. A spokeswoman said that funds were being redistributed and would benefit pensioners nationally.

The explanation cut little ice with unimpressed former employees at headquarters, who accused the company of penny-pinching.

British Gas has previously made a contribution to the cost of the festivities at the Cumberland Hotel in central London but will not do so this year.

One former employee who regularly enjoyed the lunches at the hotel on the corner of Park Lane said it was the principle that mattered. Graham Appleton, who worked

for the company for 17 years, said: "I can't imagine it costs them a great deal to help fund the Christmas party in London."

The British Gas spokeswoman said the party had been cancelled as part of a reorganisation of funds. British Gas was to pay £1 local retired worker organisations £7 per head which could be put towards their own entertainment. "This means that the pensioners can choose to do what they like with the money."

"Considering we have 75,000 pensioners this is around half a million pounds. We are very proud of our record with our retired employees and aggrieved that people are seeing our decision in the wrong light."



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Nigeria

Continued from page 1
record has come under scrutiny after Ken Saro-Wiwa, the writer, was sentenced to death by a military tribunal for alleged involvement in the murder last year of four chiefs of his Ogoni tribe. Last night his son Ken told Channel 4 from Auckland that his father had been taken to a secret location to be executed "soon".

Yesterday pressure was mounting on Commonwealth leaders to give teeth to the Harare democracy declaration in 1991 and to isolate countries that consistently flout its principles. Chief Anyaoku has said that the credibility of the Commonwealth's commitment to the rule of law is at stake.

But there were also signs that the Commonwealth is in disarray over how to respond to the Nigerian challenge. So far, Mr Major has been content for black southern African states to take the lead over curbing human rights excesses in Nigeria, Sierra Leone and The Gambia. But the clear signal from the Prime Minister's camp last night was that he was prepared to go further than the Secretary-General in putting Nigeria's suspension on the agenda for the informal weekend retreat of leaders in Queenstown on South Island. Officials said the Prime Minister had proposals he intended to table at the retreat.

These could go beyond his plan for regular monitoring of human rights in troublesome countries.

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Rail deal

Continued from page 1
commentators said the Government had achieved an impressively high sale price on the deal.

"This has to be a good deal for the taxpayer. We have got rid of the desperately needed investment in rolling stock is actually delivered," said Roger Ford, the editor of *Rail Privatisation News*.

Total gross proceeds for the Treasury will be swelled to more than £2.5 billion as the buyers will have to pay back to the Government £800 million in cash as dividends.

However, Sir George was criticised for failing to give assurances that the sale would lead quickly to orders for new trains.

The fleet of trains was divided up among three leasing companies, Angel Train Contracts, Eversholt Leasing and Peterbrook Leasing, by the Government last year. They were each given roughly a third of the locomotives and coaches.

Two, Eversholt and Porterbrook, were acquired by management and employee teams backed by a range of City institutions for £380 million and £527 million respectively.

Angel Train was bought for £672.5 million by a consortium comprised of Nomura International, the London arm of the Japanese investment house; Babcock & Brown, an American owned specialist leasing company, and John Prideaux, the former managing director of InterCity, who will be chairman of the company.

Cash flood, page 25

Christian charity wins scratch card victory

By IAN MURRAY

A SMALL Christian charity has forced Camelot to drop its Christmas scratch cards and to publicise the fact that the National Lottery has no connection with the fund-raising group.

The deal means that the charity will retain exclusive rights to the name Christmas Cracker, which it has used since it was set up in 1989. Camelot, which launched its

Christmas Cracker scratch cards in mid-October, is to print no more of them.

Camelot is to pay for leaflets to be distributed, explaining that there is no link between the lottery and the charity. All outlets for the scratch cards will be advised to inform customers.

Christmas Cracker was shocked to discover that the cards carried their name with a pattern similar to their own logo.

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Ex-policeman jailed for supplying guns to criminals



Jones: used shop as front to sell weapons

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A FORMER policeman who supplied arms to criminals after setting up a gun shop was jailed for 11 years yesterday. Ivor Jones, 42, a former sergeant, used the shop as a front to sell more than 250 weapons throughout the country.

Passing sentence, Mr Justice Drake told Jones: "You were intentionally and deliberately supplying guns into the hands of people who would commit or would be likely to commit serious offences and thereby in the course of criminal offences would be likely to endanger life."

He said Jones and three partners, who were convicted at Luton

Crown Court of conspiring to possess firearms and ammunition with intent to enable other people to endanger life, had been caught up in an evil trade.

John Blarick, 63, a gun enthusiast from Covington, Cambridgeshire, was sentenced to 11 years; Peter Jarman, 33, a car dealer from Milton Keynes, was sentenced to seven years; Trevor Chennells, 42, from Raunds, Northamptonshire, was sentenced to six years. Jones's wife, Diane, 34, was convicted of conspiring to deal in firearms and was sentenced to 18 months, suspended for two years.

During a five-week trial the jury was told Jones' gun shop at Kettering, near his home in

Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, had been a front to supply firearms to the criminal world. He had gone into business in 1990 after being invalided out of the police after 18 years' service with the Northamptonshire force when a clay pigeon struck him in the neck.

Two years later police traced a .38 Smith and Wesson revolver recovered from a car dealer in Milton Keynes to Jones. He had apparently sold it to an American serviceman for immediate export, but inquiries revealed that the serviceman had retired from the airforce in 1966 and was a friend of Blarick, who the police came to believe was the architect of illegal sales. By December of the same

year police in Luton were becoming aware of the easy availability of weapons among the criminal fraternity in the town. The Luton branch of the South East Regional Crime Squad discovered a chain of individuals dealing in illegal firearms which stretched back to Jones.

The guns most in demand were easily concealable "Saturday night specials". .38 Smith and Wesson revolvers. Inner-city gangsters and drug dealers also favoured small hand guns known as "snubnoses". They fitted comfortably into jacket pockets and waist bands.

In the gun register he was required to keep at the shop, Jones showed the guns — more than 250

of them — had been sold to American servicemen completing their tour of duty in Britain and about to return to home. But police visited America to check with the supposed purchasers and found none had bought guns from Jones.

He had taken their names from details printed in a gun enthusiasts' magazine, *The American Rifleman*, of July 1979. Blarick, who had connections with United States Air Force bases at Alconbury and Molesworth, had been instrumental in the deception.

In fact, the guns were still in this country and in the hands of violent criminals. Many have still not been traced although inqui-

ries have led police to inner-city areas of Liverpool and other neighbourhoods. The guns are thought to have fallen into the hands of drug dealers and gangs.

Despite the scale of gun sales, police think Jones made only £10,000 from his activities. A former colleague said: "He had always enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle in the police."

"He was always the flashy one. If you like, a bit of a Jack the Lad. He was always the one with the expensive car and all the luxuries."

"When he moved in with Diane he was anxious to keep up with the lifestyle he had enjoyed and that's why he got into this business of supplying guns illegally. It was pure greed."

I like to keep the garden tidy, says man who surrounded flower beds and lawns with barbed wire

Gardening fanatic poisoned his neighbours' dog

BY PAUL WILKINSON

MALCOLM PRESTON was so proud of his garden that he waged war on any animal that intruded. He laid barbed wire in the flower beds and poison in the plant pots, a court was told yesterday.

But he was reported to the RSPCA when Sam, his neighbour's labrador, ate seven pots of cat food laced with anti-freeze and paracetamol. Sam had to have his stomach pumped and suffered liver damage, magistrates in Chester-le-Street, Co Durham, were told.

Mr Preston, 47, a hospital supplies manager, made up the deadly concoction because he was going on holiday and did not want his garden damaged. On the day he was due to leave, seven-year-old Sam, owned by Colin and Jane Lines, walked into his garage and ate the mixture.

Yesterday Mr Preston was found guilty of causing unnecessary suffering to Sam and three charges of putting down poisonous substances against the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. He was fined £350 with £620 costs. RSPCA officials

who went to his smart bungalow were staggered by what they found. Iain Kane, an inspector, said: "There was barbed wire on top of the flower beds, under the soil and around the lawns."

Preston admitted crushing paracetamol tablets into catfood and adding anti-freeze but claimed he had made up the poison only once to stop animals while he was away. Inspector Kane found a bottle of milk containing aspirins in the garden.

Clive McKeag, for the prosecution, said Preston claimed the aspirins were a bird deterrent. "That is nonsense. The mixture could only do harm to any animal which ate it. That dog very nearly died. Mr Preston told his neighbours he put barbed wire in his garden to hurt the cats. He told them the mixture was there to kill the cats. He callously prepared that mixture, his intention was to harm and that was unforgivable."

Jane Lines, 62, told the court that she nursed Sam for a whole weekend as he recovered from the poisoning. She

said: "He was extremely ill. He had constant nose bleeds and kept being sick."

Preston told the court he intended to kill slugs with the mixture. "I am a keen gardener and like to keep my garden neat and tidy at all times. I didn't intend cats or dogs to eat the mixture and I didn't think they would because it would taste vile." As soon as he realised Sam had eaten the poison he told his owners, Preston said. "By telling my neighbours I've landed myself in trouble," he said.

After the case, Inspector Kane said: "There are gardeners and there are fanatics. When it gets to putting down barbed wire and poisoned cat food it is going too far."

Mr Lines, 62, said: "The drugs damaged Sam's liver and he seems tired all the time. I don't know what Malcolm thought he was doing."

Mr Preston, who was visibly shocked by the penalty, refused to comment but Ken Howe, his solicitor, said: "He is a mild-natured man whose life has been destroyed by all this."



Colin Lines with Sam, who almost died after eating tins of poisoned cat food. Preston, right, denied causing the dog unnecessary suffering



Venables 'tried to cheat Spurs'

BY ROBIN YOUNG

TERRY VENABLES, the England football coach, tried to cheat Tottenham Hotspur by asking an advertising company to overcharge the club while reducing bills to his West End nightclub, it was alleged yesterday.

Mr Venables' nightclub, Scribes West, is being sued by the advertising agency Fugler and Fugler for £19,300 outstanding on a £30,000 bill for an unsuccessful campaign to recruit new members. In a witness statement produced as part of the evidence for the trial at Central London County Court, Jeffrey Fugler, 43, director of the agency, said the suggestion that he should overcharge Spurs to offset the Scribes bill was made at a meeting in August 1992 by Mr Venables' business partner, Eddie Ashby.

The statement said: "Ashby came to the point. He said that Venables wanted me to overcharge Tottenham Hotspur Football Club on jobs to offset my fees from Scribes. I was shocked at this suggestion from someone who was, after all, the chief executive of a public limited company."

Mr Fugler also alleged that he heard Mr Ashby demand £50,000 in cash in connection with the £2.1 million transfer of the England forward Teddy Sheringham from Nottingham Forest to Spurs. "All this disturbed me considerably because it indicated to me the

sort of financial impropriety that Ashby seemed to be indulging in on Venables' instructions," he said.

His statement also alleged that David Webb, the former Southend United manager, had set up a marketing consultancy as a front for the transfer of two players. "I was given to understand by Ashby that Mr Webb's marketing consultancy was actually something to do with the earlier sale of two players by Southend United to Tottenham Hotspur."

Mr Venables spent 20 minutes in court. He will give evidence later to avoid interrupting his weekend with the England squad before next week's friendly international against Switzerland.

Scribes West is defending the claim. The hearing continues today.



Venables: his club is being sued over bill

Jealous boyfriend seized feline rival

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A JEALOUS lover "cat-napped" his girlfriend's pet because he believed that she loved it more than him. John Jenkins was so tired of seeing Melanie Rowlings shower her tabby cat Minnie with affection that he bundled the cat into his car and dumped it on wasteland miles from home.

When he confessed, Miss Rowlings stormed out of their home and reported him to police, who charged him with animal cruelty. Yesterday Jenkins, 36, was fined £200 and banned from keeping a cat for three years after admitting cruelty.

Magistrates at Bridgend were told that he snapped after arriving home from work to find cat mess in the kitchen. "I'd just finished a 12-hour shift and it was the last straw. I picked the cat up and drove to wasteland," he told the court.

Miss Rowlings never saw the cat again and the couple abandoned their marriage plans. Jenkins, of Kenfig Hill, Mid Glamorgan, said outside the court: "I regret it now because it has cost me a very close relationship but I suppose it was inevitable the cat would come between us sooner or later. I always hated that cat, Melanie loved it more than me. I couldn't bear to see her showering a cat with love and affection: it was as if I didn't exist."

"I must admit I used to play

with the cat a bit when Melanie was out. Minnie was all right, as cats go. But I wasn't going to stand for all the pampering and in the end I decided it was the cat or me."

"I took Minnie in my car and on my way to work I stopped and let her go. I made sure there were some houses quite close so she could find a new home."

"Melanie comes from a family of cat lovers and I found that hard to handle because I don't like cats. But Melanie flew off the handle when I told her what I'd done and I know she is very upset that Minnie hasn't come back."

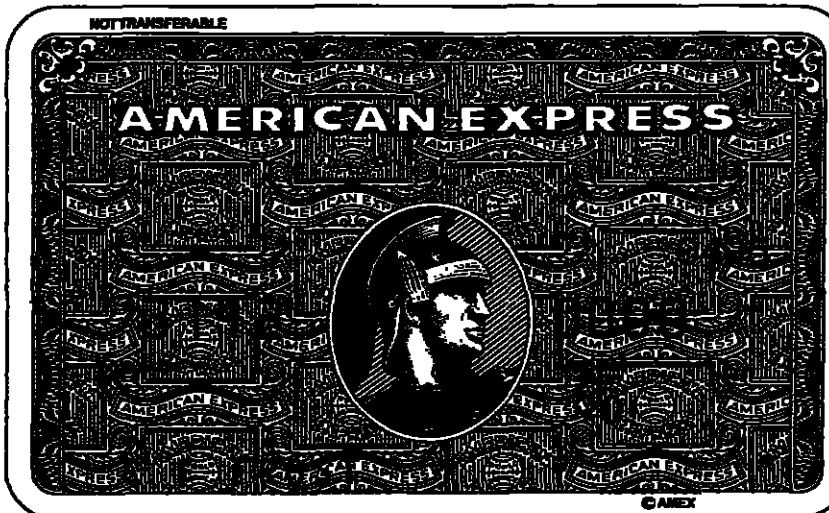
Miss Rowlings, 30, a jeweller, said: "I've always loved cats and I made sure I looked after Minnie properly. It is ridiculous to say I put my cat first. I was just being a responsible pet-owner. But John couldn't handle that. He thought I preferred Minnie to him. It's so stupid being jealous of a cat."

Jenkins, a quarry worker, was unperturbed by the ban on keeping cats. "They may as well have made it a lifetime ban. I've never liked cats and I'll never have another one. I couldn't come to terms with the cat taking over the house. It was spoiled rotten."

He has a new girlfriend, who shares his feelings about cats. "She is lovely and prefers dogs," he said.

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TT/10.11

Nothing succeeds like symmetry

BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

IF YOU want to get ahead, get symmetrical. For it is the most symmetrical of plants, insects, flowers and mammals that come out on top in the natural world, that came out on top in the natural world, a seminar in London was told yesterday.

Dr Anders Pape Møller, a population biologist at the University of Copenhagen, said there was growing evidence that symmetry was a much more powerful influence than had been realised.

His own studies had shown that he could ruin the chances of swallows finding mates by trimming their tails unevenly, and that bumblebees shunned flowers whose petals were not well-

matched. British researchers have shown that symmetrical racchorses run faster, while a Japanese team reported that symmetrical scorpions live longer than their lopsided cousins.

The same ideas have been applied, rather more controversially, to human behaviour. Dr Randy Thornhill of the University of New Mexico has shown by measuring human characteristics that people with the most symmetrical faces are judged the most attractive.

Not only were the more symmetrical subjects the most attractive, they also had more fun. Students with 'near-perfect' symmetry had two to three times as many sexual partners as the asymmetrical ones.

More unexpected was his finding that

symmetrical men make better lovers. In a study of 86 couples in their early 20s, he found that women with lopsided lovers had orgasms only 30 per cent of the time, while those with the most perfectly symmetrical partners enjoyed them 75 per cent of the time.

Similar considerations apply to women. Dr Thornhill has found. Women with the most children turn out to have the most evenly matched breasts.

The explanation offered by Dr Møller is that symmetry is the outward sign of inner genetic fitness, and that animals, insects and man have learnt to choose partners who possess it, because that gives them the best chance of producing offspring.

Beloved resort Hockney the charm northern

AFTER more than 30 years in the heart of the English north, the Hockney family has been forced to leave their beloved home. The family, who have lived in the house for over 30 years, have been asked to leave by the local council. The family has been asked to leave the house by the local council. The family has been asked to leave the house by the local council.

Hospital apologises over baby cash offer

ANOTHER baby has been born at a hospital, but this time the hospital has apologised over a cash offer. The hospital has apologised over a cash offer. The hospital has apologised over a cash offer.

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WHAT HI-FI? AUGUST 1995

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SONY

عالم من الاله

Beloved resort steps into the frame as artist dreams of leaving California for a land where he can smoke without ire

Hockney eyes the charms of northern view

AFTER more than 20 years of luxurious self-imposed exile in Los Angeles, David Hockney has been thinking of settling in a different coastal landscape: Bridlington.

For the greatest living British painter, the Humberside resort has three attractions. His 95-year-old mother lives there. It has changed little from the England he remembers. And smoking is not banned.

"It is one of the least changed bits of England I know," he said yesterday, talking about his homesickness on Radio 4's *Today* programme. "It's very nice. I come back every three months and I spend a lot of time there."

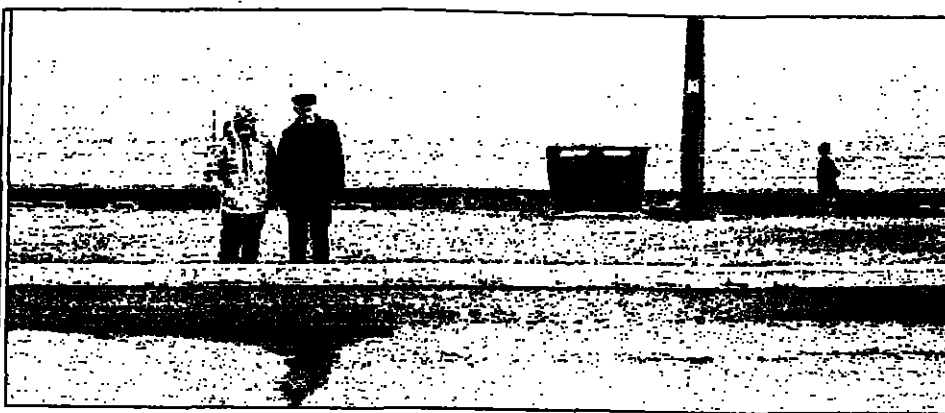
In California, he said, "you can't smoke anywhere and nobody puts forward any contrary argument. I get a bit fed up so I stay at home."

Yorkshire-born Hockney, 58, originally settled in Los

Angeles because of his love for what he called the "three Ss—sun, sea and sex." But the carefree Californian lifestyle is difficult for an unrepentant smoker. Instead of enjoying restaurants and bars, he is becoming more of a recluse, staying in his home by the swimming pool he has painted so often.

In the past, he has said that he cannot come back to England mainly because of his affection for his two dachshunds, Stanley and Boodge, who feature in many of his paintings. He could not stand the thought of them in quarantine.

This morning Hockney flies back to California after the successful launch of his retrospective exhibition at the Royal Academy. A *Times* comparison of Pacific destination and his North Sea dream town shows that it would be hard to find two more different places.



BRIDLINGTON

Co-ordinates: 54.05N 0.12W
Population: About 35,000, of whom more than 10 per cent are pensioners. There is a gay contact line: "Ring Terry."
Sunshine: 1,473 hours annually, 554 in summer. Usually 622 millimetres of rain, 152 in summer, but this year "we're probably drier than LA".
Crime rate: Local newspaper recently rated it worst place for murders in the area—five in eight years, two associated with drugs. About 100 arrests for drug possession annually, 1,000 burglaries and a similar number of violent crimes.
Golf courses: One private, one public.

Swimming pools: Four.
Homes: An average three-bed house in the outskirts costs £65,000 but a Georgian house in the conservation area of the old town centre would start at about £100,000.
Smoking: David Hockney can puff to his heart's content virtually anywhere in Bridlington. A few restaurants have no-smoking areas.
Beaches: 12 miles, only half of them sandy. Dogs can roam on sections of them.
Eating out: Meal with wine at a good restaurant costs £25. North Sea fish and chips a lot cheaper.
Main art galleries: Only one,

plus two museums, collection of memorabilia about the aviatrix Amy Johnson who holidayed in the town at about the same time Lawrence of Arabia was stationed near by.
Newspapers: Bridlington Free Press and Bridlington Gazette and Herald.
Skyscrapers: None. 12th-century church. Georgian conservation area. Edwardian promenade refurbished for £7 million.
Theme parks: Leisureworld, complete with swimming pools, theatre and cinema.
Mayor: None. Tory MP.
Cruises: Scarborough.



LOS ANGELES

Co-ordinates: 34.00N 118.15W
Population: About 12 million in Greater Los Angeles.
City golf courses: 13.
City swimming pools: 58. In the Hollywood Hills area, where Mr Hockney and his dachshunds live, 40 per cent of the homes have a pool of their own.
Homes: Starting price of a three-bedroom family home in the Hollywood Hills is about £250,000.
Smoking: Not allowed in any restaurants or city-run public buildings. Allowed at sports stadiums only in marked enclosures behind stands.
Beaches: There are 80 miles of beaches but dogs are

property reported so far this year: 161,407.
Violent crime: So far this year, there have been 686 homicides and 53,789 "others". There were 32,137 muggings. Crimes against

not allowed on any of them.
Eating out: Meal with wine at a leading restaurant costs about £45 a head.
Main public art galleries: Six, and four other principal museums.
Newspapers: The Los Angeles Times.
Skyscrapers: Twenty buildings are more than 50 floors high.
Theme parks: Disneyland, Six Flags Magic Mountain, Universal Studios, Knott's Berry Farm.
Mayor: Republican.
Cruise destinations: Acapulco, Puerto Vallarta, Panama, Costa Rica, Caribbean.

Hospital apologises over baby cash offer

By Emma Wilkins

AN OFFER of £2,000 compensation to a woman whose healthy baby was aborted in a hospital mix-up was insulting, the hospital admitted yesterday. Tracey Burke, 31, who had an abortion when Addenbrooke's Hospital wrongly told her that her baby boy was suffering from Down's syndrome, said the offer was "unbelievable".

John Ashbourne, chief executive of Addenbrooke's NHS Trust, apologised yesterday to Ms Burke, of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, as it emerged that health officials made the offer without consulting the hospital. Mr Ashbourne said: "The offer was made without the knowledge or authority of anybody at Addenbrooke's. I agree with Ms Burke that it is insulting and derisory."

Ms Burke's amniocentesis results were confused with those of Michelle Woods, 28. Ms Woods, from Thetford, Norfolk, was wrongly told that told her baby was healthy. Four days later the mistake was discovered and she terminated her pregnancy.

Ms Burke's partner, Andrew Ellis, said: "We are very angry. They can't seem to get anything right."

Tycoons come to rescue of Review

By Robin Young

TWO of the world's richest men have promised financial support to the *Literary Review*, the monthly magazine edited by Auberon Waugh.

Lord Hanson and John Paul Getty II have joined a list of benefactors which already includes Sir Tim Rice, and the Duke of Devonshire. Mr Waugh said he needed "four or five more biggies" to secure his publication's future. "We lose £80,000 a year, and we have not been not paying any rent or rates."

For 15 years *Literary Review* has been owned and financed by Naim Attallah, who retired this month as group chief executive of the jewellers Asprey. The magazine will stay at offices in what Mr Waugh calls Chateau Attallah, in Soho, but is likely to have to pay for the privilege.

"Naim has been an absolute angel," Mr Waugh said yesterday. "He has never got any advantage from owning the *Literary Review*."

Lord Hanson said he had pledged £25,000 to the magazine. "It may seem a little bizarre, but I think the *Literary Review* is well worth supporting."



ANNE'S FALLEN IN THE PLAYGROUND... SHE'LL BE OK.
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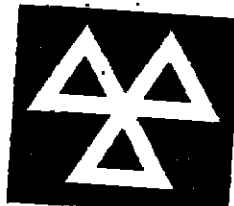
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Schools chief calls for pupils to learn right from wrong

By DAVID CHARTER
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

TOO many teenagers leave school believing morality is a "matter of individual taste" and unable to tell right from wrong, the Government's chief curriculum adviser said yesterday.

Dr Nick Tate said teachers should be more prepared to tackle issues such as the breakdown of the family and the growth of crime. Dr Tate, chief executive of the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority, said the purpose of education was too little regarded in a system obsessed with helping youngsters merely to "get on" in a materialistic world.

Dr Tate added he was worried about "the implications of the pervasive hedonism of our society for the traditional social virtues of altruism and restraint" and "the confusion and uncertainty about the future which face many young men in particular". He said these issues were "often kept at arm's length" from the day-to-day requirements of the National Curriculum.

Dr Tate's comments to a conference in London on the future of qualifications for 16 to 19-year-olds come as the SCAA is preparing a conference in January on the spirit-

Examination league tables to be published later this month will show that Hackney Downs, the first school to be singled out for closure for poor performance by the Government, has better GCSE results than the east London rival expected to take many of its pupils. At Hackney Downs 11.3 per cent of boys achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A to C, compared with 10.8 per cent at Homerton House. Sixty-seven per cent of Hackney Downs boys achieved five or more grades between A and G, compared with 59.8 per cent at Homerton House.

ual and moral dimension of the curriculum. Religious leaders and social commentators will give their views on how teachers can help youngsters to think about relationships, family break-up and "coping with conflict", as well as their role in building students' self-image and "a vision of what they can contribute to the world".

Dr Tate said that he was not pressing for new statutory requirements for teachers but suggesting the National Curriculum could in future include more "education for

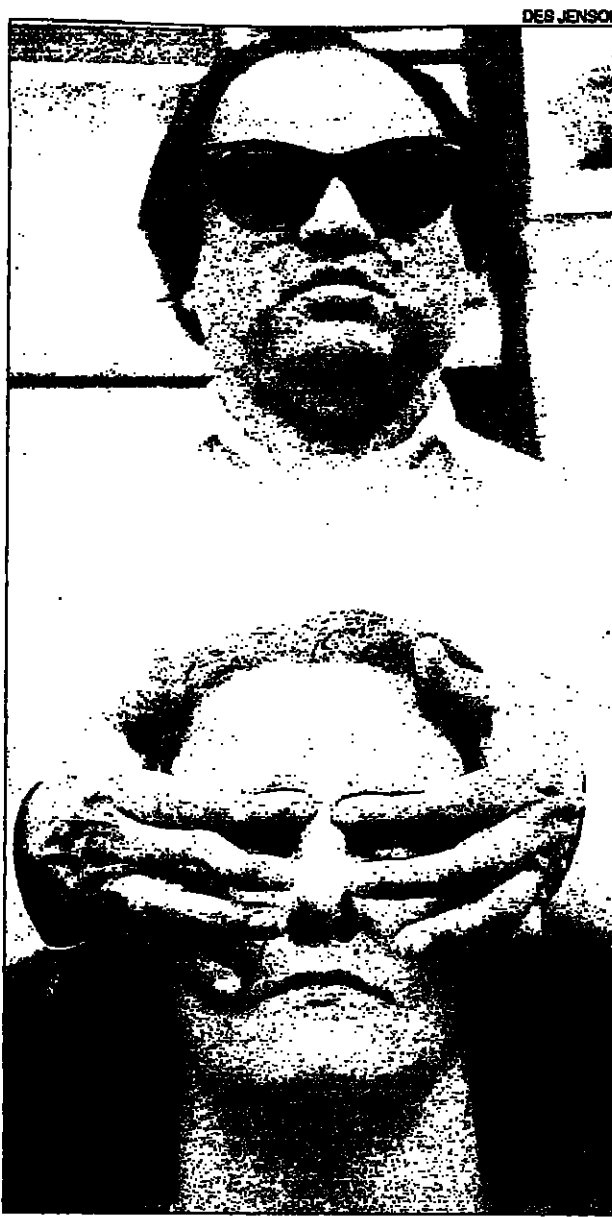
citizenship". He added that the lack of moral sense was being compounded by the failure of a significant number of pupils to gain even the lowest grade pass in GCSE mathematics or English. He said: "This is 100,000 young people a year not reaching by the age of 16 the average attainment that might be expected of a 10 to 11-year-old."

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said teachers were already "very keen on getting children to understand the difference between right and wrong and in encouraging consideration for those around them".

Sir Ron Dearing, chairman of the SCAA, said one of the main priorities of his review of qualifications was to "capture those youngsters who have not for whatever reason been making it". The key was to capture their interest and build on it: "If a youngster is only interested in motorbike engines, the key is to convince him that if he wants to understand the manuals, he needs to know how to read."

The review is likely to preserve the right of bright sixth-formers to study only A levels although other students can follow a broader range of studies after 16.

Education, page 39



A visitor receiving an Indian head massage at the Healing Arts exhibition at the Royal Horticultural Halls in Westminster. The exhibition, which promotes natural therapies, runs until Sunday

How farm parasites can infect water supplies



MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas Stuttford

THE British have faith in the cleanliness of their water supplies, and only feel completely safe cleaning their teeth with tap water, or enjoying ice with their gin and tonic, when in this country.

This unquestioning chauvinism can be misplaced. Hundreds of holidaymakers to the Torquay area this year and to rural Oxfordshire a few years ago will never forget the attacks of diarrhoea they suffered after drinking the local water. By comparison it made the usual experience of "Delhi belly" when travelling to some exotic foreign spot seem no worse than the effect of a heavy dose of liver salts.

The infecting organism in both outbreaks was cryptosporidium, a small parasite spread by the faeces of grazing farmstock. The government report on the Oxfordshire outbreak of cryptosporidiosis has recently been published.

The authors acknowledge that it is impossible to guarantee that cryptosporidium can be kept out of the water supply, but suggests that by keeping animals away from streams which supply domestic water, and by having well-organised drinking water treatment processes, the risk of an outbreak can be kept very low.

The infecting oocysts of the parasite are passed in the

animal's dung and then swept by rainwater — particularly when heavy storms follow a period of drought in which the ground is very hard — from the pastures into the rivers, and thereafter to the bathrooms and kitchens of those living in the surrounding countryside. Contamination of the water also occurs if farmyard slurry is allowed to seep into the streams.

Another means of infection is a visit to farm parks. Although a farm visit enables children to pat the calves, goats and sheep with benefit to their psyche and their education, there is a risk of picking up cryptosporidium. Parents should pay heed to the notices hanging in the stockyards warning visitors to wash their hands after a farm walk.

In otherwise healthy people an attack of cryptosporidiosis lasts for about a week before clearing spontaneously; there are no antibiotics effective against the organism and no disinfectants which will kill it while

in the water supply. In previously fit people the infection results in watery diarrhoea, abdominal pain, fever and a feeling of general malaise.

The picture is different if the patient is immunocompromised whether from, for instance, steroid treatment or diseases such as Aids or leukaemia. In these patients the diarrhoea persists, weight loss is marked and there is severe abdominal pain from bile duct disease. Cryptosporidiosis is often a significant factor in the downhill course of an immunocompromised patient.

Although the infectivity of the oocysts is particularly high, the infective dose of oocysts may be as low as one hundred, their virulence is often low and many infected patients do not show any clinical signs.

The Department of Health is reassuring and places its faith in farmers keeping their stock away from streams, and in a careful adherence by water boards to the accepted treatment processes.

Nervous L-driver ejected examiner

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

A LEARNER driver spent the night after her driving test in police cells because she punched her examiner, a court was told yesterday.

Tcheeka Johnson, 19, lost her temper after clipping a kerb during her test in Lowestoft, Suffolk, and assumed she had failed. She punched Susan Brennan on the leg, then screamed to a halt and pushed the examiner out of the passenger door.

Mrs Brennan was left standing by the road as Johnson drove off. However, the teenager then parked and walked back to Mrs Brennan, demanding she hand over her provisional licence. Ipswich magistrates were told.

Ros Jones, for the prosecution, said Johnson, of Great Yarmouth, became agitated after hitting the kerb early in the test and was convinced she would fail. "The test had not gone very well and on one occasion Mrs Brennan had to intervene. Miss Johnson said, 'I know I've failed, drive me

back', or something similar." Mrs Brennan, a magistrate, eventually agreed to let Johnson park the car but the teenager lost her temper and assaulted her, before bundling her out of the vehicle and driving off. She was arrested after receiving her fail certificate.

Johnson, who admitted common assault and driving without a full licence, was given a 12-month conditional discharge, fined £50 and ordered to pay Mrs Brennan £75 compensation.

After the hearing, Martin Arnold, from the British School of Motoring, said the learner driver was welcome to take more lessons and have another go at her test. "It seems that what happened was totally out of character and caused by excessive nerves."

Jane Wallace, spokeswoman for the Driving Standards Agency, said Mrs Brennan was considering taking civil action against Johnson.

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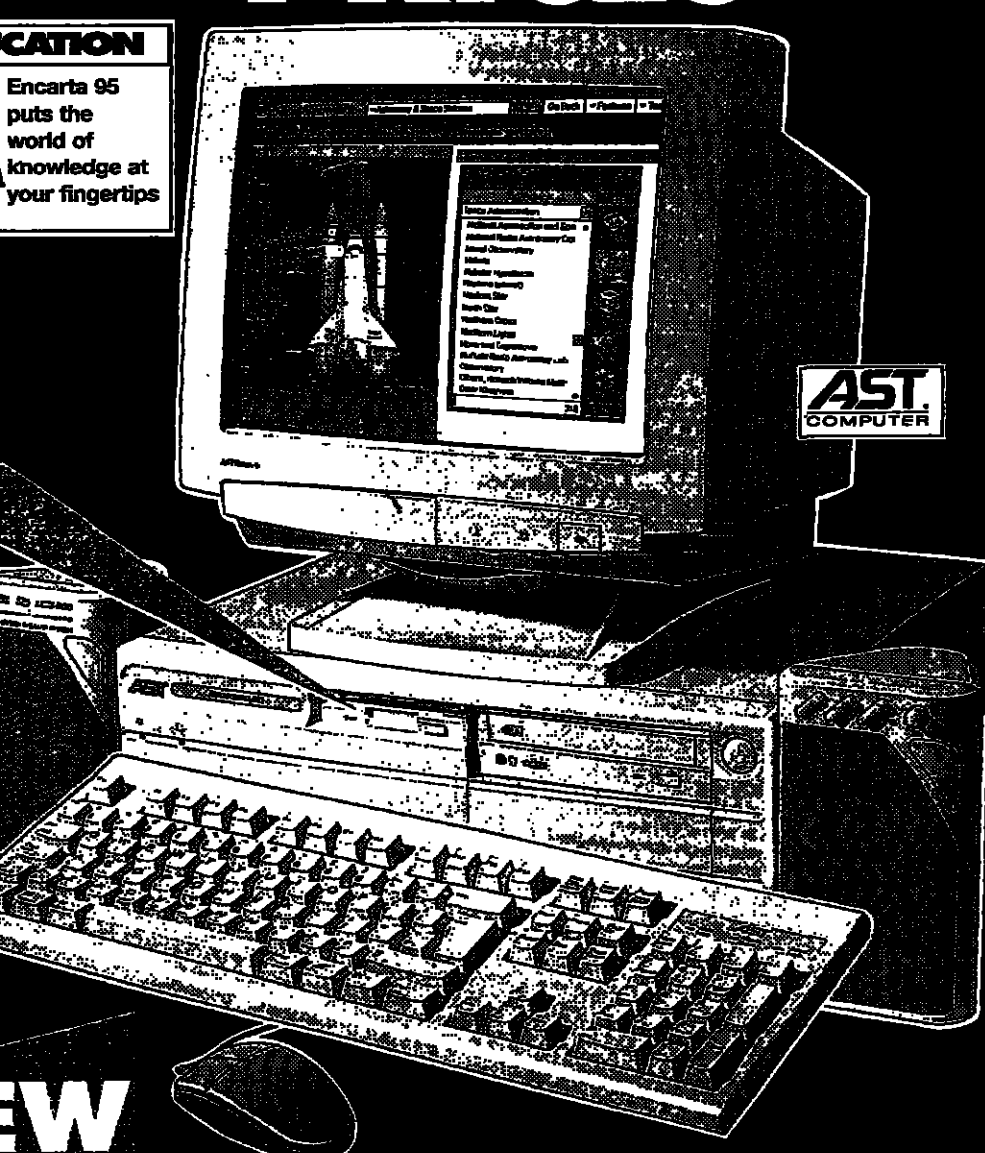
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Labour denies Workfare accusation over proposal to cut benefit if unemployed shun training

Brown unveils penalty plan for young jobless

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR will bring in tough penalties for young people failing to take up job opportunities, Gordon Brown announced yesterday. He denied that the policy was a way of introducing Workfare to Britain.

Under the Shadow Chancellor's plans, the unemployed aged under 25 will have to accept a place on one of four job or training schemes within four weeks or lose 40 per cent of their benefit. The scheme, which marks the first time that Labour has promoted

benefit penalties, is part of a £1 billion programme to help 650,000 young people to get back to work.

Mr Brown said Labour would fund the programme from the one-off, £3 billion windfall tax it plans to impose on the privatised utilities. Employers who took on the young unemployed would get a £60 weekly tax rebate while young people taking up voluntary work or a place on Labour's environmental task force would get a £20 benefit top-up. The Shadow Chancellor de-

nied that employers would be able to sack older workers to get the £60-a-week rebate for the under-25s. His aides made clear that any existing employee would have the right to go to an employment tribunal if they felt they had been dismissed on those grounds.

Labour indicated that young workers would have no such legal rights against being sacked after they had been in jobs for six months. However, the aides emphasised that experience abroad had shown that between 50 and 70 per

cent of young people securing jobs in similar schemes were kept on. Those losing their jobs would be entitled to benefit for a further six months before the same penalties would apply.

Brian Mawhinney, the Conservative Party chairman, who claimed that Labour had already offered to spend its windfall tax on six separate items, dismissed the plan as "fantasy economics".

The Tories also pointed out that Labour had opposed the Jobseekers Act, which imposes penalties on those failing to take up a job. "It is pure hypocrisy for them now to claim to be concerned about helping people to get off welfare and back into work," a senior spokesman said.

Earlier, at a press conference at Westminster, Mr Brown made clear that most young people would want to take up one of the options Labour was proposing and therefore would not be penalised. "These are jobs and training opportunities that are being offered to young people who think people will want to take up," he said.

"This is not Workfare in the sense that it is understood, as in the penalisation of the unemployed for being unemployed and asking people to work in



Gordon Brown and Dawn Primarolo, one of his Shadow Treasury team, announcing Labour's plans yesterday

return for their benefit." Workfare schemes, forcing people to do community work for their benefit, were introduced in America in the early 1980s but have mostly proved unsuccessful. Labour's proposals are based more on the system in Sweden, which balances incentives with penalties. Mr Brown said the package represented Labour's "first step in our modern-

isation of the welfare state". The plans were welcomed by Nigel Harris of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, who said: "It will help get our young people back to work."

But the Green Party said the measures were "dated, oppressive and a serious infringement of civil liberties". A spokesman added: "This displays how new Labour is

really just old hat, with a twist of Stalin to boot."

Paul Convery, of the Independent Unemployment Unit, said: "Coercing young people into training doesn't work. The vast majority of young people want to train, provided they know that training is going to lead to qualifications or to work."

Angela Knight, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, said

Labour was promising people a fresh start but would deliver a dead end. "Gordon Brown's 'make work' schemes won't create real jobs. It is businesses which create jobs, not governments. All that Labour policies on a minimum wage and the social chapter would do is add costs to businesses and destroy jobs, particularly for young people, by making it more costly to employ them."

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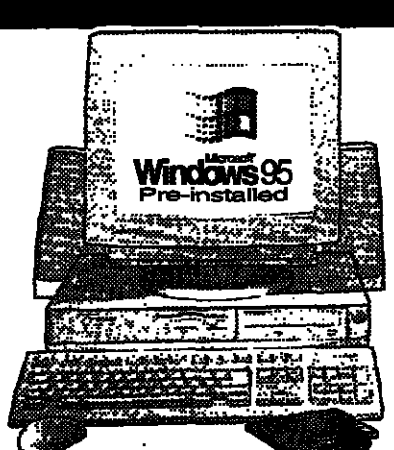
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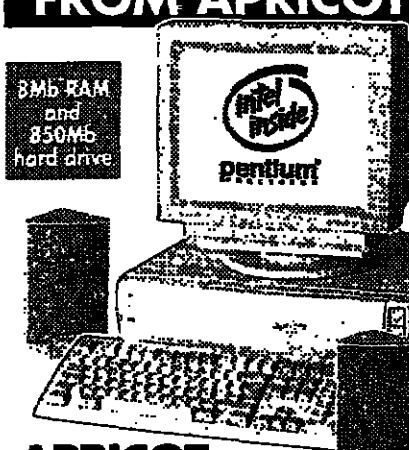
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Scargill suggests new Left party

By PAUL WILKINSON

ARTHUR SCARGILL was reported yesterday to have put forward proposals to form a breakaway political party called Socialist Labour which would be to the left of the Labour Party. However, a spokeswoman for the National Union of Mineworkers president denied that he was preparing to split away from Labour, of which he has been a member for almost 30 years.

The reports spring from a weekend meeting of leftwingers in London, called to discuss the Labour Party's move to the right and the future of socialism. Mr Scargill, 57, is said to have presented a nine-page discussion document, "Strategy for the Left".

It canvassed launching a new party by next May which would contest every constituency and described Labour's new rules as an "unmitigated disaster". The present party was said to be indistinguishable from the Social Democrats who split from Labour in the early 1980s. The document

suggested tapping into the body of young people disillusioned with conventional politics who took direct action on matters such as the environment and the poll tax.

Nel Myers, Mr Scargill's spokeswoman, said: "Mr Scargill only discussed alternatives following the modernisation of the party under Tony Blair. He is not planning a breakaway party - he has been presenting a debate, not a new political party."

His actions were dismissed by Labour MPs with constituencies in South Yorkshire. Kevin Barron, MP for Rother Valley, said: "If Arthur Scargill left the Labour Party there would be more members pleased than displeased." Denis MacShane, who represents Rotherham, described the plan as "utterly irresponsible". He said: "If I was as disenchanted with the Labour Party as Arthur seems to be I think I would leave."

Mr Scargill was not available for comment.

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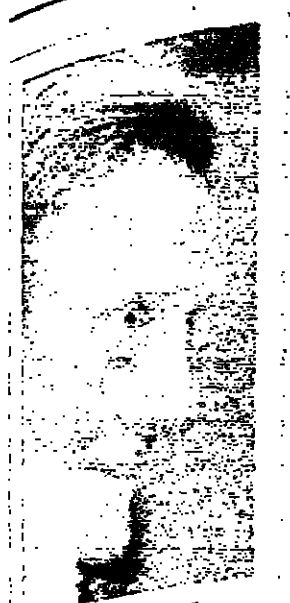
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War on waste cuts into 'bumph'

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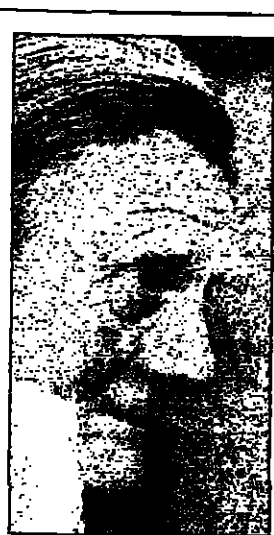
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Heseltine wants to cut form-filling

War on waste cuts into 'bumph'

BY NIGEL WILLIAMSON
WHITEHALL
CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL HESELTINE launched a "bump-busting" blitz to get rid of millions of unnecessary pieces of paper in Whitehall yesterday.

The Deputy Prime Minister, announcing the second phase of his campaign against waste, said workers in NHS trusts, health authorities, local government and farming were spending too much time filling in government forms instead of delivering frontline services.

The first leg of the exercise earlier this year, co-ordinated by the Health Department, the Home Office and the Department for Education and Employment, had saved doctors, police officers and teachers from filling in 32 million unnecessary forms. Mr Heseltine denied that the aim was to cut jobs or save money. "The objective is not to reduce budgets but to put cash into frontline services."

He was joined under a "war on waste" banner at the Treasury yesterday by four other Cabinet ministers — the Health Secretary Stephen Dorrell, the Environment Secretary John Gummer, the Agriculture Minister Douglas Hogg, and the Public Services Minister Roger Freeman — as well as Sir Peter Levene, the Prime Minister's personal adviser on efficiency.

Mr Dorrell said he hoped the campaign would help to redirect £300 million from bureaucracy into health services, while Mr Gummer said that a reduction in Whitehall's paperchase could probably save several forests.

City worker is first woman to be picked for safe seat in three years

Tory standard bearer rejects gender quotas

BY ALICE THOMSON
POLITICAL REPORTER

THE Tories have finally selected a woman to fight a safe seat at the next election after John Major's increasingly desperate calls for more female representation at Westminster.

Theresa May, who has been selected for the newly created seat of Maidenhead, is the first woman out of the 29 candidates chosen for Tory seats in the past three years and could end up being the only new woman on the Tory benches after the next general election. Labour has already adopted 40 new women candidates.

Conservative Central Office, which is deeply embarrassed by the dearth of women being chosen by their grassroots, is celebrating Mrs May's appointment but is concerned that the party could have fewer than 12 women MPs after the next election.

Mrs May is the ideal Tory candidate. She went to Wheatley Park comprehensive and St Hugh's, Oxford, before working at the Bank of England and then heading for the City and the Association for Payment Clearing Services.

She faced her political baptism fighting a Labour seat, Durham NW, and enjoyed sparring with ex-miners and unemployed factory workers. She then fought a by-election in Barking against Margaret Hodge, where the worst accusation levelled against her was that she was boring. She joined the Tory party in her teens, has been a councillor for Merton, south London, since she was 29 and actually enjoyed the gruelling selection weekend which sorts out whether candidates know what cutlery to use for a black-tie dinner and what to say about the common agricultural policy.

She has been in the final selection for six Tory seats and has been the only female candidate each time. She loves cricket and cooking. Her husband also works in the City.

Until last week, no Tory association had chosen a woman candidate since the last election, when five Tory women were elected. They were Angela Browning, the junior Agriculture Minister, Angela Knight, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, Cheryl Gillan, the junior Education Minister, Jacqui Lait and Lady Olga Maitland.

Maidenhead is a new seat, created when the constituency of Windsor and Maidenhead was split by the Boundary

Commission. Among the original applicants for the seat were such senior Tories as Sir George Young, John Wans, Eric Forth, Sir Paul Beresford, and Norman Lamont.

Mrs May's male rivals say she is extremely professional, an eloquent speaker and a tough debater, and compare her to Gillian Shephard. "She will be one of the few career women to make it past the battleaxes on the selection committee and that's because she knows her recipes and doesn't have children," a competitor said.

But while most Tory men are chosen as candidates in their early 30s and some are as young as 27, Mrs May has had to wait until she is 39. She is determinedly gaffe-free, refusing to admit which side of the party she is on. She would like lower taxes, but only if they are economically sensible, and is against a federal Europe. But she is horrified at the idea that she would ever be a Euro-rebel.

Mrs May does not believe she was overlooked for other seats because she was a woman and says that she was never questioned on her family life. "You can't force people what to choose and we certainly don't want female quotas like the Labour Party just to balance the gender books. Tories know that Margaret Thatcher managed it: soon people will realise that other women can do as well."

Maidenhead is a safe Tory seat. Election experts predict that, if the constituents vote as they did at the general election in 1992, Mrs May would have a majority of some 17,000.



Theresa May made five unsuccessful selection attempts before Maidenhead

US reformer urges minister to reject tough sentencing and harsh jail regime

Don't ape American penal policy, Howard is told

BY RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL HOWARD was warned against adopting American-style policies to curb crime yesterday, only days before he is to visit "super-max" jails and a boot camp in America.

The Home Secretary leaves on Sunday for a five-day trip during which he will tour a young offenders' jail near Washington with a tough regime similar to that planned when Britain's first boot camp opens next summer.

Mr Howard will also visit Marion super-max prison in Illinois and Oak Park Heights jail in Minnesota, which incorporate the latest design

and technology to contain the most dangerous prisoners.

The Home Secretary's visit comes after Sir John Learmont's report into the Parkhurst escape, which recommended construction of a maximum-security prison for up to 300 Category A prisoners. Mr Howard has ordered prison service and home office officials under Robin Haward, former governor of Strangeways prison, to study the proposal. He has indicated that such a prison would be built with private finance and run by the State.

Oak Park Heights is one of the most secure prisons in America and has not had a serious breakout since it opened in 1982. The prison is built

into a hill to give a natural perimeter on three sides. Inmates have televisions, radios and typewriters in the 70 sq ft cells and can exercise for three hours a day. The jail was visited earlier this year by Michael Forsyth, the former Prisons Minister, and Derek Lewis, the sacked Director-General of the Prison Service.

Yesterday, however, an American penal reform campaigner cautioned against admiring his country's approach to punishment. "Britain can learn much from the disastrous experiment that has been American penal policy over the last two decades. They key message is do not go down this road: not only does it fail to reduce crime, it also has

dangerous implications for the very fabric of society," said Marc Mauer, assistant director of a non-profit-making organisation on sentencing based in Washington.

Mr Mauer criticised the Home Secretary's proposals for a boot camp and mandatory life sentences for second-time rapists and violent offenders. He said that similar measures in America had led to massive spending on prisons, the exclusion of those who break the law, increased polarisation of society and inexorably rising rates of crime.

He told the annual meeting of the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, in west London, that from 1980 to 1992

the American prison population had doubled. Twelve states had adopted policies of automatic life sentences for people who committed three violent offences. "These policies threaten to bankrupt state governments, while having little impact on crime," Mr Mauer said.

The Home Office said that the number of crimes in America had fallen by 16 per cent, from 40.2 million to 33.6 million, in 1980-92 while during the same period the jail population had risen from 470,000 to 1.2 million. "Our analysis leads us to believe that considerable use of imprisonment is one reason why crime numbers have fallen there," a spokesman said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ashdown reshuffles leading players

Paddy Ashdown announced a reshuffle of his leading MPs to create the line-up that will take the Liberal Democrats into the next election. Alan Beith, the deputy leader, was given a wider role with overall responsibility for the manifesto and a strategic overview of the party's parliamentary teams. Alex Carlile takes over most of Mr Beith's home affairs portfolio, including justice and immigration, but Mr Beith retains responsibility for police, prison and security matters.

Simon Hughes, who is on the party's left wing, moves from education to health, and Don Foster is promoted to head the education, housing and local government team. David Chidgey, winner of the Eastleigh by-election, becomes transport spokesman, allowing Paul Tyler to concentrate on agriculture and rural affairs. Other posts remain unchanged.

Hospital waiting lists fall again

Health service hospitals are treating patients more quickly than ever before, a health minister said yesterday. Gerald Malone said the figures indicated "remarkable progress" and proved the success of government reforms. Official figures show that the number of patients waiting more than a year for treatment has fallen to a record low of 28,204 compared with more than 200,000 in 1989. The average waiting time for treatment has dropped from nine months to four over the same period. The shortened waiting lists were achieved despite a 25 per cent increase since 1989-90 in the health service's workload to 8.5 million cases.

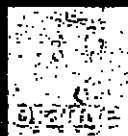
Newton launches anti-drug teams

More than 100 local drug action teams have been set up. Tony Newton, the minister responsible for the Government's anti-drug strategy, launched the scheme during a visit to a junior school. He said the 105 teams would assess drug-related crime, help young people to resist drugs and reduce drug-related health risks. The teams include representatives of the police, education authorities, health authorities, social services, probation and prison services. Mr Newton, speaking during a visit to St Mary's RC School in Notting Hill, west London, said the teams provided an organisation in which the main agencies could work together.

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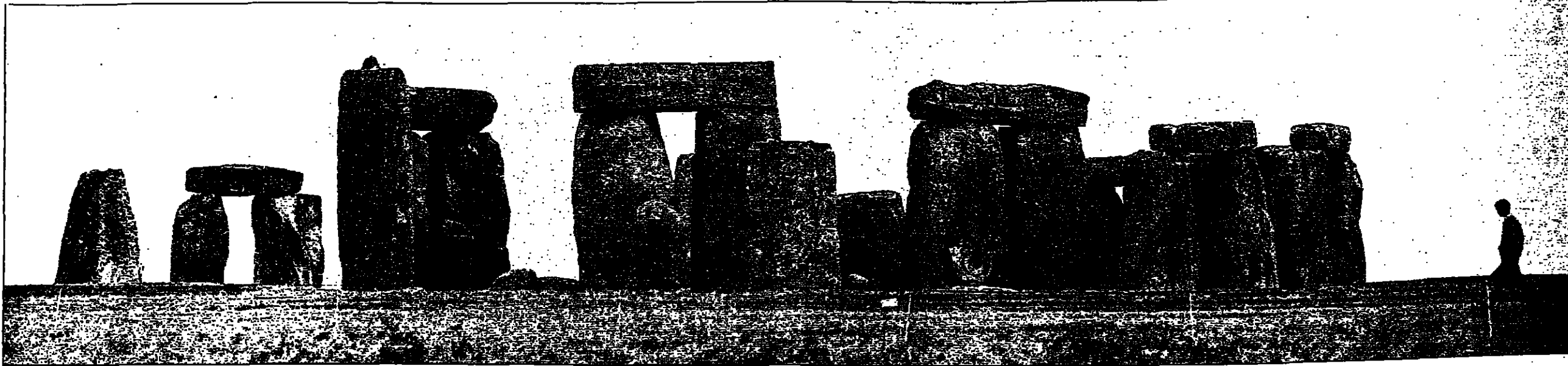
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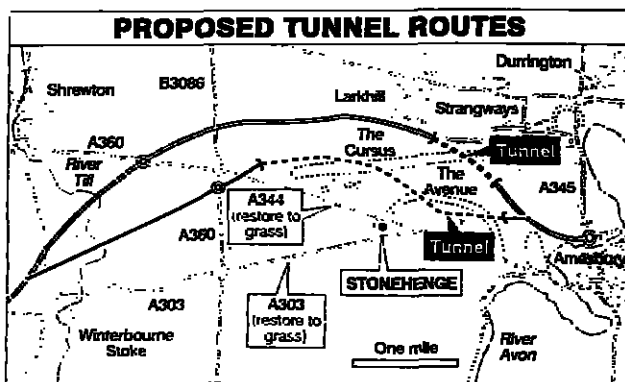
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Stonehenge yesterday: a public inquiry will have to choose between tunnels and bypasses costing millions of pounds. The Highways Agency is accused of presenting misleading figures in a war of words with English Heritage

Heritage leaders combine to fight 'butchery of Stonehenge'



By MARCUS BINNEY

ENGLISH HERITAGE and the National Trust declared their implacable opposition to road proposals for Stonehenge yesterday. They will press instead for a 2½-mile tunnel, taking the A303 under the prehistoric site at a cost of £200 million.

The two organisations will make a full professional presentation of their plans at a public inquiry. Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage, said: "Our route has no adverse impact on archaeology, landscape, or local houses. It barely cuts into the

World Heritage site and eliminates noise and pollution. This is the only solution which has widespread support, including local people."

The Highways Agency has caused anger by reviving proposals for a southern bypass among ideas for widening or diverting the congested A303. Mr Stevens said: "The southern routes represent a butchery of a World Heritage site on a scale never before seen in the world, and make a mockery of the Government signing the World Heritage convention."

Lord Chorley is chairman of the National Trust, which first appealed

for Stonehenge to be safeguarded in 1927. He added: "We will oppose any attempt by government to take our inalienable land for a southern route. We will fight in Parliament and we will win."

English Heritage has also prepared an alternative £54 million northern route, which includes a shorter tunnel as a rival to the Highways Agency's northern option, although Mr Stevens acknowledged that this would introduce noise and pollution into the site. Asked why he was putting forward a second-best scheme, he said: "I do not have

enough faith in government to believe they will do the right thing."

The Stonehenge site, flanked by two busy A roads, has long been a cause of intense debate. In 1992, the Commons Public Accounts Committee called it "a national disgrace".

English Heritage has also announced proposals to seek lottery funds for a £50 million Stonehenge Millennium Park. Mr Stevens said: "We have a vision of 4,000 acres of Wiltshire downland around Stonehenge completely without traffic."

He accused the Highways Agency of presenting misleading figures.

"They claim our tunnel scheme, costed by our engineers at £200 million, will cost £250 million. They fail to explain why. When they don't like a scheme, they simply add on huge figures and never come up with justification. Governments have got away with terrible road schemes in the past because they have been opposed by local people without resources. Now we have professional engineers cross-questioning the agency and they do not like it."

English Heritage and the National Trust plan a new Stonehenge Trust, with equal numbers of trustees.

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Potato growers fear brown rot will destroy crop

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S £660 million potato-growing industry is threatened by a devastating disease that farmers fear may already have been imported from the Continent.

Widespread outbreaks of brown rot, or *Pseudomonas solanacearum*, have blighted farms in The Netherlands, from which Britain imports nearly 200,000 tonnes of seed and eating potatoes a year. Infected fields have to be taken out of production and put down to grass for up to five years. Only one case has been reported in Britain, on a farm in Oxfordshire two years ago.

Richard Watson Jones, vice-chairman of the National Farmers' Union potato committee, said: "The threat is very serious indeed. One of the problems is that the Ministry of Agriculture is having great difficulty getting the Dutch to specify which of their farms are infected."

Under European Union rules the Dutch authorities are supposed to carry out pre-export tests and guarantee that potatoes have come from areas free of brown rot. So far the Dutch have admitted to outbreaks on about 30 farms but unofficial reports suggest that as many as 150 may be contaminated.

The EU's plant health standing committee is to hold an emergency meeting in Brussels on Monday in an

attempt to extract more information from Dutch officials and to draw up a Europe-wide control policy. Several countries, among them Cyprus, have recently turned back shipments of Dutch potatoes.

The Ministry of Agriculture has advised importers not to bring Dutch seed into Britain until further notice and instituted a system of notifying and testing consignments that are already here. But only about 200 in every 300,000 potatoes are likely to be checked for infection.

Farmers and plant scientists are worried that the threat from the import of mature potatoes from The Netherlands for processing into products such as potato crisps is being ignored.

Tom Stones, an independent microbiologist who specialises in the tissue culturing of seed potatoes, said effluent from washing the potatoes was pumped straight into rivers, "which provide the classic medium for spreading the brown rot bacteria. I am terrified the damage may already have been done."

Farmers may have to wait until next spring before they will know whether the disease, which poses no risk to human health, has spread to Britain. The disease destroys potatoes' ability to suck moisture and nutrients from the soil.

Beef joints start upward trend

WEEKEND SHOPPING

PRICES for beef have been rising recently and will go up further as Christmas approaches (Robin Young writes). There are some discount prices available on sirloin steaks for grilling and on cheaper joints, such as brisket for pot roasts.

Announced promotions this weekend include:

Asda: boneless pork leg £3.05 a kg, lamb chops £5.25 a kg, winter vegetable packs 49p for 1½ kg, crumpets 32p for 12.

Budgens: Broad Oak gammon ham 59p a 4½ lb, Uncle Ben's long-grain rice 79p for 375g, baking potatoes 35p a lb, clementines £1.19 a kg.

Co-op: whole/half leg of pork with bone in £2.49 a kg, pre-packed carrots 39p for 625g, Italian kiwifruit 10p each.

Harrods: honey-roast salmon £3.25 for 100g, San Daniele ham £3.25 for 100g, mozzarella di bufala cheeses £3.55 each.

Islands: breaded cod steaks £1.99 for six, chicken korma £1.39 for 340g, potato fritters 99p for 680g, Freshbake cherry pie twinpacks 99p each.

Marks & Spencer: pork joints £4.48 a kg, butter-basted chicken breast £3.29 for 567g, brussels sprouts 69p a lb.

Morrisons: fresh chicken 59p a lb, large gutted salmon £3.72 a kg, skate wings £5.31 a kg, frozen pork and beef sausages 99p a lb.

Safeway: brisket of beef £4.02 a kg, breaded skinned had-

dock fillets £2.49 for 320g, cooked beef 79p a ½ lb, individual apple turnovers 23p each.

Sainsbury's: fresh lamb leg £4.49 a kg, West Country farmhouse cheddar £4.37 a kg, Cox's apples 38p a lb, satsumas 95p a kg.

Somerfield: pre-sliced Scottish smoked salmon £2.99 for 200g, fresh British boneless pork leg joint £2.84 a kg, fresh size 4 eggs £1.19 for 18.

Tesco: rump steak £7.43 a kg, lamb neck fillet £7.29 a kg, whole mackerel 79p a lb, aubergines 59p a lb, Conference pears 39p a lb.

Waitrose: Scottish rolled brisket £1.99 a lb, large honeydew melons £1.25 each, organic swede 29p a lb, loose chestnuts 99p a lb.

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Rabin killing 'part of plot backed by West Bank rabbis'

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

THE killing of Yitzhak Rabin was part of an extreme right-wing Jewish plot to sabotage the Middle East peace process, Israeli security sources said yesterday. The plot, they said, had the backing of radical rabbis from the occupied West Bank.

Two of the plotters were said to be members of Israel's crack Golani infantry brigade. By last night five alleged militants, in addition to the self-confessed assassin, Yigal Amir, a 25-year-old law student, were under arrest.

Police also announced they had uncovered grenades, explosives and fuses at Mr Amir's home near Tel Aviv. The cache was described by one official as "enough to make any terror group proud".

Disclosure of the alleged plot — which further shocked an already traumatised nation and dashed claims that Mr Rabin's murder was the work of a lone religious fanatic — came as the main right-wing Likud opposition party reported "numerous" threats against the life of its leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, and attacks on several of its offices. One office was sprayed with the words: "Likud murderers."

Earlier, a leading right-wing rabbi, Yoel Ben-Nun, from the West Bank settlement of Ofra, announced that



Netanyahu: received threats from the Left

at the end of the official seven-day mourning period for Mr Rabin, he would begin identifying rabbis who maintained that the Prime Minister deserved to die because he supported the peace process.

"There are those among us who still say Rabin deserved death because of the injunction regarding the killing of someone who wants to kill you," the rabbi told a meeting of more than 300 leaders of religious-Zionist factions in Jerusalem.

"I will wage war against them. If they do not quit, or we do not run them out by the end of the mourning period, I will begin naming names." The threat was met with applause.

against Mr Netanyahu have been received at Likud headquarters in Tel Aviv. "Netanyahu is next... we will kill him," one caller said.

The decision of Mr Rabin's widow, Leah, to make public her views that Mr Netanyahu had incited right-wing militants has increased the determination of some on the Far Left to take personal revenge against him. A placard near the Prime Minister's former residence reads: "Bibi [Netanyahu], Rabin's blood is on your hands."

At the Bar-Ilan religious university near Tel Aviv, where Mr Amir studied, a spokesman said plans were under way to expel an American student who wrote inflammatory remarks about Mr Rabin's assassination on an Internet bulletin board. It read: "Happy holiday everyone! The witch is dead: the wicked witch is dead."

Moshe Shahal, the Police Minister, said yesterday: "We think that there was a connection between a group of persons who planned and arranged the assassination of the Prime Minister. We think they established a form of organisation to assassinate the Prime Minister and other political persons based on their ideology to try and prevent the peace process."

All of those arrested so far



Ohad Skornik, centre, appearing in a Tel Aviv court yesterday. Mr Skornik, 23, was at university with Yigal Amir, Yitzhak Rabin's killer

are in their twenties, with alleged links to Eyal, a militant Jewish splinter group which broke away from the anti-Arab Kach movement founded by the fanatical, American-born racist Rabbi Meir Kahane — who was himself assassinated by an Arab in his native New York five years ago.

Two of the suspects appeared before a heavily-guarded Tel Aviv magistrates court yesterday. They were Dror Adani, 26, a seminary student from a West Bank settlement and Ohad Skornik, 23, who was on his honeymoon when police arrested him.

Also in custody are Mr Amir's elder brother, Haggai, who is suspected of involvement in making two dum-dum bullets that hit Mr Rabin at close range: Avishai Raviv, 28, leader of Eyal; and Benny Aharoni, from the occupied West Bank.

The seriousness with which the Government is taking the threat of more religiously-inspired attacks was demonstrated yesterday when security around Shimon Peres, the acting Prime Minister, and other leading politicians was dramatically increased. Mr Peres was surrounded by teams of armed police and secret service agents who, for the first time, ran alongside his armoured-plated Cadillac. Ironically, at Mr Rabin's funeral on Monday, this tactic was used by those guarding Arab mourners. "That is the Arab way, we do not need it here," one Israeli security man told me.

Commenting on the fears now gripping ordinary Israelis of more violence to come, Ze'ev Chalels, one of Israel's leading columnists wrote in yesterday's *Jerusalem Report*: "There are plenty of Yigal Amirs out there, nice Jewish boys armed with pistols who take their orders directly from God. Yitzhak Rabin, surrounded by bodyguards in the heart of Tel Aviv, was not safe from them. Until we disarm them, nobody is."

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Syrian message welcomed

BY MICHAEL BINYON



Peres: compared notes with Malcolm Rifkind

ISRAELI leaders yesterday welcomed assurances brought by Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, that Syria was ready to move forward immediately with peace talks and promised that the new Government would not let the momentum slacken.

President Weizman said he hoped the signals from Syria "will be a little more loud and clear". But, he added: "It is good." Shimon Peres, the acting Prime Minister, said he was glad to compare notes with Mr Rifkind and added:

"We have decided to go ahead with the peace process, and maybe even more so, because that was the will of Prime Minister Rabin."

Israeli government sources say three more Arab countries are to announce the establishment of diplomatic relations. On Sunday, Mr Peres is due to announce that Qatar and Oman, which sent representatives to Yitzhak Rabin's funeral, will open consulates in Israel. Bahrain, which did not send a representative, is expected to follow suit.

Militants tell tourists to leave Egypt

Cairo: Egypt's main Muslim militant group, Gama'a al-Islamiya, warned foreign tourists to leave the country immediately yesterday and said it was responsible for an attack on a train in southern Egypt on Tuesday. Ten Egyptians were wounded in the attack.

Guns fired at a second train on Wednesday, wounding a Dutch man, 60 and a French woman, 25. The attacks were the first on tourist targets since March. (Reuters)

Arafat's fledgeling state greets Rifkind

FROM MICHAEL BINYON IN GAZA CITY

TWENTY months have made a world of difference in the Middle East. Last year, Douglas Hurd was appalled as he gazed at the filth of Gaza: the solemn faces glaring at the Israeli guards, the neglect and overcrowding visible everywhere. Yesterday, his successor as Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, stood side by side with Yasser Arafat, the Palestine Liberation Organisation leader. Palestinian police in smart green uniforms watched as the two men voiced their hopes for the future and their satisfaction with the pace of progress so far.

Much of Gaza is still a slum: overcrowded, lacking sanitation, with few jobs and little hope. But everywhere the skyline is changing as new buildings go up, streets are repaved, markets have revived and the atmosphere in tranquil. The modest two-storey headquarters of the new Palestine National Authority looks like a converted beach club — which it is. But a stream of visitors from overseas has made the journey here to encourage the Palestinians, offer moral and financial support to Mr Arafat, and — as Mr Rifkind in turn did yesterday — speak of the political transformation that has brought autonomy.

The convoy raced down from Jerusalem and met the new state at a pile of cement blocks, a sea of Palestinian flags and a bevy of new border guards on the sand dunes beside the Mediterranean. Mr Arafat's Mercedes whisked Mr Rifkind through crowded streets to the centre of this long, narrow strip where almost a million people are trying to create a state.

Mr Arafat, fresh from a lengthy talk with Shimon Peres, the Israeli acting Prime Minister, spoke of his grief at Yitzhak Rabin's assassination. He said that he would continue the dialogue with Mr Peres, something fellow Palestinians overwhelmingly supported, he added.

Gaza is still virtually cut off from the West Bank; it depends on Israel for electricity, telephone system, money and most other essentials. But, at last, its people feel the first glimmerings of statehood.

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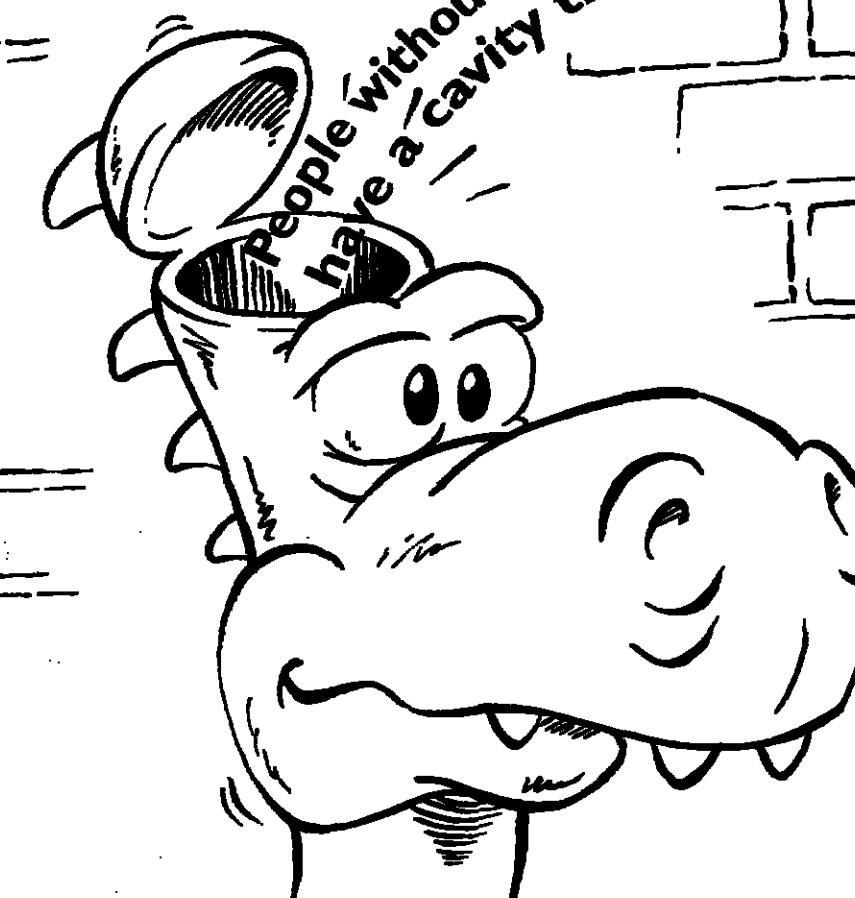
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14 AUCKLAND SUMMIT

THE TIMES FRIDAY NOVEMBER 10 1995

Nigerian oppression highlights need to match human rights rhetoric with actions

Pressure grows on Commonwealth to punish 'bad boys'

FROM MICHAEL MUNRO IN AUCKLAND

THE Auckland summit is emerging as a turning point in the implementation of Commonwealth ideals on democracy and human rights. Oppression in Nigeria is merely the focus for a growing belief that, for the organisation to continue to be worthwhile, its members must live up to the 1991 Harare declaration on fundamental values.

The official "bad boys" of the Commonwealth may be Nigeria, The Gambia and Sierra Leone, but there is no lack of other candidates.

Chief Enaka Anyaoku, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, and himself a Nigerian, enthused that since Harare, when member states committed themselves to the values of democracy and just government, six countries had moved from military or one-party state to embrace multiparty democracy.

But since then, new military regimes have seized power in Nigeria (1993), The Gambia (1994) and Sierra Leone (1992), earning those African countries the sobriquet of "errant states" from Commonwealth officials. Chief Anyaoku is presenting the Auckland summit with a plan to enhance the capacity of the Commonwealth to enforce the ideals of Harare, although rejecting a suggestion it was "make-or-break" time. However, it was important for the credibility of the Commonwealth that some agreement was reached, he said.

The Nigeria of General Sani Abacha is the target of most of the criticism, particularly with the confirmation of the death

sentences imposed on nine Ogoni activists. The Nigerian Human Rights Community, an alliance of human rights and pro-democracy groups, has a five-man delegation in New Zealand to urge the Commonwealth to intervene.

There is growing high-level concern also about The Gambia and Sierra Leone, where corruption and human rights abuses are rampant. Officials say that moves to encourage a return to democracy and the rule of law are imperative.

Chief Anyaoku was reluctant to pre-empt the leaders' talks on the errant members, and Jim Bolger, the New Zealand's Prime Minister and the conference chairman, would only note that "some errant states are not performing entirely within the Harare declaration". But if the exhortations of lobbyists in Auckland are any indication, other Commonwealth nations are

testing the spirit of tolerance and understanding the organisation likes to promote.

Among those airing grievances in Auckland are New Zealand Tamils, who will be staging a protest march near the conference centre today to highlight what they call Sri Lanka's "genocidal" attacks on Tamils and Colombo's refusal to recognise the Tamils' right to self-determination. The protesters claim 400,000 Tamils have been displaced and thousands more killed, and that Sri Lanka is hindering international aid agencies.

Members of the Kashmiri Association of the South Pacific yesterday began a hunger strike in Auckland to draw attention to alleged human rights abuses against Kashmiri guerrillas in Jammu and Kashmir. The Washington-based Kalistan Affairs Centre has also sent representatives to Auckland to rally the local Sikh and Kashmiri communities into action against India, which it condemns as "the world's largest fascist state".

Greenpeace has been firing its environmental salvos at the more prosperous nations. Britain, predictably, was under fire yesterday for "collaborating" with France and other states on nuclear weapon development, and its refusal to condemn French nuclear testing in the South Pacific.

Canada and Australia have been attacked for their "tangible links to the French nuclear weapons industry" through uranium exports to France.



Protesters wear John Major masks during an Auckland rally yesterday against Britain's refusal to denounce French nuclear tests in the Pacific

Sporting strife tries coach Major

BY MICHAEL MUNRO

JOHN MAJOR is the first British Prime Minister to visit New Zealand since Harold Macmillan in 1958, though he could be forgiven for believing someone forgot the welcome mat.

Of the 33 government leaders to arrive in Auckland over the past two days for the Commonwealth summit, Mr Major was given by far the sternest grilling by the international media. The clamour, hardly surprisingly, was over his support for French nuclear testing.

Even when he ventured to an Auckland school and showed off his rugby handling skills to a group of exuberant youngsters, as part of a programme to promote Commonwealth objectives through sport, anti-nuclear protesters unfurled a banner nearby. At a state

SKETCH

luncheon later in his honour there was more hostility. Anti-nuclear pickets were outside and some New Zealand politicians boycotted the function. One of the absentees, Jim Anderton, the leader of the left-wing Alliance Party, had branded Mr Major the "nuclear nutter".

To coincide with the luncheon there was a peace rally in Auckland, with Mr Major the target of protesters' venom. Some wore John Major face masks and held aloft placards denouncing him.

Peter Williams, a leading Auckland QC who joined the recent New Zealand peace flotilla to France's nuclear testing ground in French Polynesia, declared: "If Major does not get the message I think he should be committed to a mental

asylum." However, the protest lost its focus and fell into disarray when a group of Maori nationalists, part of a hardcore group agitating for greater independence, hijacked the occasion.

They had been given limited time to preach their message, but when it expired they refused to leave the stage. What was supposed to be a peace rally quickly degenerated into a shouting match and many of the 2,000-strong crowd started to drift away.

The media's attention also drifted away from Mr Major and the nuclear testing issue during the day as Nigeria emerged as the new whipping boy. A series of statements by leading figures including President Mandela of South Africa, catapulted Nigeria's human rights record into the conference limelight.

Keating call for nuclear test censure

BY NICHOLAS WOOD

BRITAIN and Australia were on a collision course last night over French nuclear tests. Paul Keating, the Australian Prime Minister, made clear that he wanted the Commonwealth summit communiqué to condemn the Mururoa atoll explosions.

But John Major was equally adamant that he would not associate Britain with any statement which repudiated President Chirac's decision to proceed with the tests.

Shortly before arriving in New Zealand last night, Mr Keating said: "Our position is that we should have a clear condemnation of France for its testing programme... that is consistent with the communiqué two years ago."

Mr Major spent the day in Auckland defending the right of France to test its nuclear weapons. British officials said that the Prime Minister would refuse to endorse any part of the communiqué, to be issued on Monday at the end of the four-day gathering which starts today, which put France in the dock.

In a BBC interview today Mr Major said he was unconcerned about following in the footsteps of Margaret Thatcher being in a minority of one in the Commonwealth. The Hague: New Zealand urged the International Court of Justice yesterday to outlaw all nuclear weapons and declare testing illegal. The court is deciding whether international law permits the threat or use of nuclear arms. (Reuters)

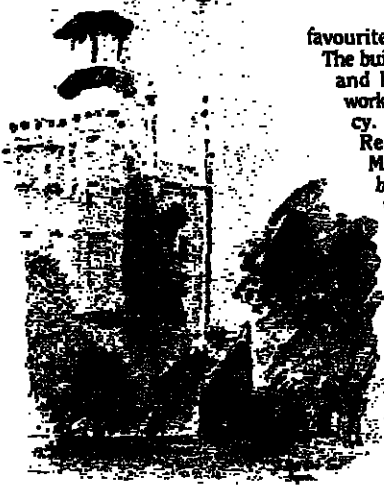


Abacha: target of most criticism

Leading article and Letters, page 21

Starting January 2nd we shall be inaugurating a new flight series direct from London Gatwick to Agra for the Taj Mahal and in the process avoiding the tedium of travelling to and from Delhi and permitting the traveller to see that which he has come to see and able to relax and explore other parts of Rajasthan at an easy pace and when the weather is at its most pleasant. Our arrangement includes the International flight to and from Agra, visits to the Taj Mahal and Red Fort, 7 nights accommodation at either the 4-star Agra Clarkes Shiraz hotel or alternatively at the 5-star Mughal Sheraton at a small supplement. A variety of optional visits to Jaipur, Patanpur Sikri, Sikandra, Bharatpur and Delhi are available. Alternatively you may elect to just relax and enjoy the facilities of your chosen hotel.

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favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahal. The building is of white marble and has pietra-dura inlay work of extraordinary delicacy. Later continue to the Red Fort, a complete Moghul city in itself, built by Akbar and enclosed by turreted, red sandstone walls.

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Mandela resists Tutu demand for sanctions against Abacha regime

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

AN APPEAL to the Commonwealth heads of government to expel Nigeria was made yesterday by Archbishop Desmond Tutu of Cape Town. He also called for sanctions against the military regime for human rights violations.

Describing the death sentences on Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists as "deeply shocking", Archbishop Tutu said: "The Nigerian military Government is either deliberately cooking a snook at the Commonwealth heads of government or preparing the way for a cynical ploy in which it will reverse this decision to stave off pressure over its numerous other human rights violations."

The archbishop visited Nigeria earlier this year and his headline stance against the

military junta is at loggerheads with President Mandela's insistence on quiet diplomacy. Mr Mandela has resisted growing pressure to take a firmer stand against Nigeria. This week Nigerian human rights activists, among them the son of Mr Saro-Wiwa, called on Mr Mandela to use his moral authority to condemn the Nigerian regime.

The Nigerian authorities have scoffed at suggestions that the country would be suspended from the Commonwealth. Critics say a failure to act against the regime legitimises the military junta. Mr Mandela reaffirmed his belief that talks were the best policy, declaring that "reconciliation, peace and dialogue are very important weapons". Foreign affairs officials are

planning to convene a meeting of Southern African Development Community states in Auckland to formulate a strategy on Nigeria. President Mugabe of Zimbabwe indicated yesterday that southern African leaders do not speak with one voice when he issued a warning of serious consequences for Nigeria should negotiations to commute the death sentences of the minority rights activists fail.

Mozambique, a former Portuguese colony, is confident of being accepted into the Commonwealth at the summit. A British diplomat in Maputo, the capital, confirmed that Mozambique stands a good chance of membership if its request to join is backed by other southern African states.

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Food for thought

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Yeltsin carries out second reshuffle from hospital bed

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN yesterday sought to prove that he is still in control of Russia when he ordered his second high-ranking personnel reshuffle in 48 hours.

A day after dismissing Tatyana Paramonova as head of the country's Central Bank, President Yeltsin appointed a new deputy for Andrei Kozlov, his embattled Foreign Minister, Vasili Sidorov.

Russia's deputy head of mission to the United Nations, will be assigned to help Mr Kozlov.

The move did not clarify the ultimate fate of the Foreign Minister, whose dismissal has been widely predicted. But it did help to reassert President Yeltsin's authority on the daily workings of government, which he has been attempting to control for the past two weeks from his hospital bed.

By far Mr Yeltsin's most controversial decision was made on Wednesday, when he replaced Ms Paramonova, the widely respected Central Bank chairwoman, by her deputy, Aleksandr Khandryev.

Ms Paramonova won acclaim after she was installed just over a year ago to restore order at the bank in the wake of "Black Tuesday", the day in October 1994 when the rouble crashed to a record low against the dollar.

She helped to stabilise the Russian currency with tight monetary policy and a tough attitude towards the country's commercial banks.

This summer Ms Paramonova masterminded the so-called "rouble corridor", which halted the currency's wild fluctuations and held it

Moscow: Russia's political parties have proven to be formidable forgers, falsifying hundreds of signatures and addresses of supposed backers. The Central Election Commission said of the 39 parties registered for next month's election, the party of extreme right-wing Vladimir Zhirinovskiy had the most violations. (AP)

between 4,300 and 4,900 to the dollar.

However, her no-nonsense approach made her few friends among Russian bankers or their political allies, and her appointment was twice rejected by the Duma, the lower house of parliament.

"Paramonova is the brightest victim of the tight economic policy," Pavel Tepukhin, an economics expert, told the Moscow Times. "She suffered because she did everything correctly."

But Pavel Medvedev, the chairman of the parliamentary banking subcommittee, accused Ms Paramonova of having an autocratic style and of refusing to listen to critics.

Nevertheless, there is also some suspicion that she was targeted because of her sex, and because she was the only high-ranking woman in Moscow's political and financial hierarchy. Aleksandr Pochinok, deputy head of the Duma's budget committee, said that Ms Paramonova's male replacement might be able to do things she was incapable of because of her gender.

"The course [of policy] will be the same, but there will be

more order, because in certain situations it is easier for a man to do what a woman cannot do — namely, punch someone in the teeth," Mr Pochinok said.

Despite the upheaval at the Central Bank, national fiscal policy is likely to remain much the same while the present reformist leaders retain key economic portfolios in the Government and Russia stays committed to tight fiscal spending under an International Monetary Fund loan agreement.

Andrei Kozlov, another senior official at the Central Bank, yesterday deplored the sacking of Ms Paramonova, whom he described as one of the most competent and professional individuals in her field anywhere in the world.

It is not clear if President Yeltsin intends to keep Mr Khandryev in the post permanently, or whether he has in mind one of his own economic advisers for the job. Whatever Mr Khandryev's fate, ministers and high-ranking officials in the Government are likely to be on their guard in coming days as the Russian leader shakes up his administration and keeps his opponents guessing.

Leading article, page 21



An Ethiopian holds a knife to the throat of Sofia Masielou, a stewardess, after hijacking an Olympic Airways jumbo jet half an hour before it landed at Athens airport from Australia yesterday.

Hijacker arrested as he talks to reporters

Melakw Mekebeb, 32, who wanted political asylum, demanded to be allowed to speak to journalists when the aircraft landed. While he was talking to them, a Greek police squad overpowered him. The plainclothes police officers pushed through the reporters, snatched the stewardess safely from Mr Mekebeb's grip and then wrestled him to the floor. The stewardess, who was said to be pregnant, was not hurt. Mr Mekebeb was charged with using violence on an aircraft, unlawful detention of a person and

who called for help. Mr Mekebeb told the police that he hijacked the aircraft because he did not want to go back to Ethiopia. The police reported he had said that he had been jailed in Ethiopia last year for writing anti-government articles.

He had then left the country. He served three months in an Australian jail for entering the country illegally from Greece, then was put on the plane back to Athens. (Reuters)

NEWS IN BRIEF

UN troops stoned in Cyprus

Nicosia: British soldiers serving in the UN force in Cyprus were hurt in clashes yesterday with Greek Cypriot schoolchildren who were rioting over the detention of a national guardsman by Turkish forces in the north of the island (Michael Theodorou writes).

For a third consecutive day, thousands of schoolchildren, many armed with stones, tried to storm the UN buffer zone in Nicosia. Nine British soldiers were hurt in similar clashes on Wednesday.

Deneuve wins

Paris: The French gossip magazine *Voici* was ordered to pay 50,000 francs (£6,500) to the actress Catherine Deneuve for claiming that she had four fellow stars, including Brigitte Bardot. (AFP)

Rights track

Strasbourg: Ukraine and Macedonia have joined the Council of Europe human rights body. Russia had wanted to join with Ukraine, but talks were suspended after the fighting in Chechnya. (AP)

Moon barred

Bonn: Sun Myung Moon, the leader of the "Moonies" Unification Church sect, has been barred from entering Germany as "prejudicial to public security and order", the Interior Ministry said. (AFP)

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Yard admit to being 'all at sea' in search for missing Nissans

Interpol to investigate Almera heist

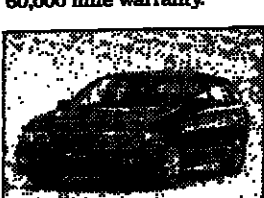
SCOTLAND YARD have admitted that they have asked INTERPOL to help them solve last week's mysterious high sea heist in which a ship carrying more than £50 million worth of new Nissan Almeras disappeared.

Inspector Doyle, who is leading the inquiry, said "To be honest, we are all at sea. A heist of this magnitude and complexity could only have been planned and executed by someone with enormous power and wealth. No one on our files fits that description, which is why we have asked INTERPOL for their help".

Nissan's cargo ship 'The City of Sunderland' was sailing through the Bay of Biscay when it disappeared from radar screens late last Tuesday night. Police have now confirmed reports that a local fishing boat spotted another much larger ship in the near vicinity, but that it failed to appear on radar. 'The idea that one ship could swallow another is not beyond the bounds of credibility' a spokesman said. 'However, the thought that this larger ship may have been in possession of

some sort of futuristic cloaking device has us very worried indeed'.

The motive behind the mysterious hijack is still unclear. Police have already dismissed the theory that the Almera heist was orchestrated by a rival manufacturer as 'baldersdash', although they readily admit that the Almera boasts levels of comfort and technology not normally associated with a family hatchback. In particular the Almera's Multilink Beam Suspension, which comes straight from Nissan's top of the range QX, and the three year or 60,000 mile warranty.



Nissan's new Almera: 5.594 were onboard the hijacked ship were onboard the hijacked ship



Chief Inspector Doyle: asked for help

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UN blames Croatia for Krajina civilian killings

FROM PETER CAPELLA IN GENEVA AND JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE United Nations special investigator for human rights in former Yugoslavia has accused Croatia of carrying out widespread killings and abuses of civilians in the Krajina region.

In an advance copy of a report to the UN General Assembly, Elizabeth Rehn says that Croatian forces deliberately targeted civilians, including women, children and the elderly, during their offensive on Serb-held Krajina in August and in the weeks after. In one of several dozen cases documented in the report, an artillery shell was fired at a tractor in Knin, killing seven people while they were trying to flee.

In another, international observers found the bodies of a 90-year-old man and his son who had been shot in the head. The report says that they were last seen alive a week before, when Croatian soldiers were removing property from their home. UN peacekeepers were also used as human shields during the offensive.

The Croatian military attacked Serb refugee columns leaving the region, according to Mrs Rehn. The former Finnish Defence Minister also has evidence of massive looting and house burning, which carried on for more than two months after the offensive. She estimates that 5,000 houses, including nearly two-thirds of those in Sector South around Knin, were burnt. About 90

per cent of the population is believed to have fled.

In The Hague, the international war crimes tribunal issued its first indictments against officers of the Yugoslav Army yesterday, accusing three members of a Belgrade-based brigade of ordering a massacre near the Croatian town of Vukovar.

The indictments bring the tribunal closer that ever to blaming the authorities in Belgrade for crimes against humanity in the former Yugoslavia. "It is the first time that the word 'Belgrade' is to be found in an indictment," Christian Chertier, a tribunal official, said. "This indictment is a clear illustration of the prosecutor's strategy to go as high as possible up the chain

of command." The independent B92 Belgrade radio station said yesterday, however, that President Milosevic of Serbia was unlikely to hand over the three officers to the tribunal.

The latest indictments stem from the murder of 261 men herded out of a hospital in Vukovar soon after the town fell into Serb hands in November 1991. The indictments charge that the three men — Colonel Mile Mrksic, Captain Miroslav Radic and Major Veselin Slijepcevic — were officers in the Guards Brigade responsible for forcing non-Serb men from Vukovar Hospital, beating them at a farmhouse and killing them.

In the United States, peace negotiators are hoping to stave

off a threatened new Serb-Croat war by pinning down a deal over the future of Eastern Slavonia, the last remaining Serb stronghold in Croatia.

President Tudjman of Croatia returned to peace talks in Dayton, Ohio, yesterday and is expected to discuss a possible accord on Eastern Slavonia with President Milosevic at the weekend.

Croatia is demanding that the area be returned to its control within a year, but the Serbs have been holding out for a three-year transition period followed by a referendum on its future.

"There is progress. We are not ready to break out the champagne yet, but there is definite progress," one American official said.

Intensifying the pressure for a settlement, however, Croatia has warned friendly governments, in a move that could threaten the entire peace effort, that it will attack Eastern Slavonia, which was seized by the Serbs when Croatia seceded from Yugoslavia, at the end of next week.

Preparing for an attack, Croatia has surreptitiously reinforced its 15,000-strong force in the area. Several hundred men from the crack Tiger Brigade were seen yesterday travelling east from Zagreb, the capital.

In Moscow yesterday, President Yeltsin vetoed a law calling for Russia unilaterally to lift economic sanctions imposed by the UN against former Yugoslavia.



President Chirac of France stands in silence by the grave of General de Gaulle in Colombey-les-Deux-Églises early yesterday to pay tribute 25 years after his death (Ben Macintyre writes). President Chirac was accompanied by members of the general's family.

Chirac tribute to de Gaulle

Admiral Philippe de Gaulle, right, the general's son and a Gaullist member of the Senate, and his grandson, Jean, left. "To celebrate the memory of de Gaulle is to

reject discouragement, conformity and fatalism," Mr Chirac said before the ceremony, in an oblique reference to his dwindling popularity. Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, and about 200 ministers, MPs and senators attended a celebratory Mass.

Kashmir hostages reported to be ill

Srinagar: One of two Britons held hostage in Kashmir is ill, according to the separatist Al-Faraj group which has re-established contact with Indian authorities after weeks of silence.

The guerrillas did not say whether the Briton was Paul Wells or Keith Mangat. Another hostage, Don Hutchings, an American was also reported to be ill, a spokesman said. Police in Jammu, the state's winter capital, said the fourth hostage, Dirk Hasert, a German, is suffering from chilblains. An official added: "They are being treated well. We are treating this as a positive development."

The decapitated body of a fifth hostage, Norwegian Hans Christian Ostroe, was found on August 13. (Reuters)

Cambodia party faces threats

Phnom Penh: Sam Rainsy, Cambodia's most prominent government critic, launched his Khmer Nation Party, but the authorities immediately questioned the legality of the move and said they could not take responsibility for any consequences. Mr Rainsy, who as a Finance Minister angered many powerful Cambodians with his stand against corruption, said his party had received numerous threats. "Threats in Cambodia are not jokes, they often materialise," he said. (Reuters)

Colombo austerity drive to fund war

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN COLOMBO

THE huge increase in Sri Lanka's war budget is a sign of the Government's determination to continue its military offensive against the Tamil Tigers and force them into peace negotiations. An austerity drive has been launched to pay for the mounting cost of fighting.

Army morale has never been higher after the victories of the past few weeks, in which they have toppled the Tigers' administrative and political structures in the Jaffna peninsula and forced them to flee.

The war is far from over: it will merely change character, reverting to old-style guerrilla tactics in which all areas of the country will be vulnerable. The Tigers are nevertheless weakened and demoralised, and the armed forces have demanded the resources to keep up the pressure. The Government agreed, but the 30 per cent increase announced in parliament this

week, taking defence expenditure to £412 million a year, shows the extent to which the fragile economy is held hostage to the war.

President Bandaranaike Kumaratunga had banked on a peace dividend after negotiating a ceasefire with the Tigers and freezing new defence procurements: it was short-lived optimism. After the rebels broke the ceasefire in April the military went on an international shopping spree for aircraft, boats and guns, forcing the Government to rethink its budget.

The Government announced this week that it would cut spending on "carnivals and extravaganzas" to save money for the military effort and the Cabinet declared that the war would be pursued "with single-minded devotion". One minister said he was dispensing with the custom of garlanding guests to save the cost of flowers.

Air crash toll 53

Buenos Aires: All 53 men, women and children aboard an Argentine Air Force plane that crashed into a hillside in the centre of the country during a severe storm were killed, police said. (Reuters)

Sakhalin storm

Moscow: Three people were killed when a typhoon swept through Sakhalin Island and the mainland Khabarovsk region in the far east of Russia. Nearly all local railways were out of order. (Reuters)

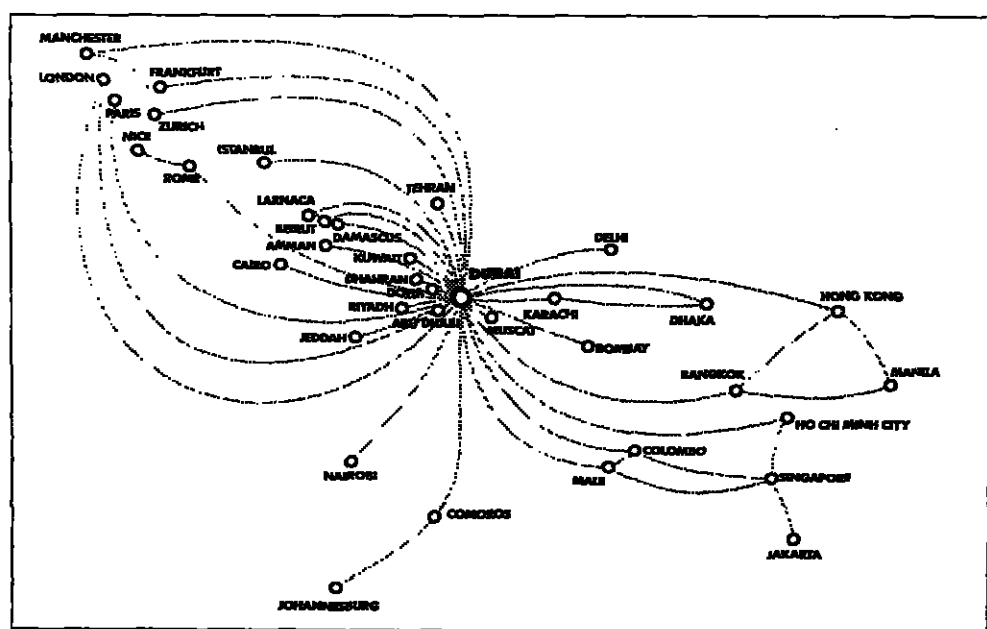
Homeless killed

Detmold: A fire killed nine people and seriously injured 11 at a hostel for the homeless in this town in North Rhine-Westphalia, German police said. There were no suspicious circumstances. (Reuters)

Activists expelled

Jakarta: Indonesia expelled nine foreigners from East Timor, and barred eight others from entering Dili, where the activists had planned to mark the fourth anniversary of a massacre by soldiers. (AP)

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US Government faces shutdown as cash runs out

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

THE United States Government will be forced to shut down for lack of money on Monday and it looks "increasingly likely" America will default on its debts for the first time in its history, the White House said yesterday.

The dire predictions came as President Clinton and Republicans in Congress neared the point of collision in their high-stakes game of fiscal "chicken" with neither side showing any sign of swerving. Mr Clinton last night convened a Cabinet meeting to discuss plans for shutting down the Government, and officials said there was a chance he would have to cancel his trip to Japan for an economic summit next week and his visit to Britain and Ireland at the end of the month.

The basic impasse is over Mr Clinton's refusal to accept what he considers a draconian Republican plan for balancing the federal budget by 2002 through drastic cuts in social programmes while offering

\$245 billion (£156 billion) in new tax breaks.

The two sides are still nowhere near a compromise. Indeed Mr Clinton, Newt Gingrich, the House Speaker, and Robert Dole, the Senate majority leader, refused to negotiate even during the 25 hours they spent flying to and from Israel in Air Force One for Yitzhak Rabin's funeral last Monday.

The Government is running out of money rapidly. A stop-gap measure that provided temporary funding for its operations expires on Monday. The Government will be unable to meet \$25 billion in interest payments to holders of US securities due next Wednesday. Robert Rubin, the Treasury Secretary, will order "extraordinary actions" — including borrowing from the government employees' pension fund — to stave off default for as long as he can. He calls a default "unthinkable".

Before the end of this week, congressional Republicans are

expected to approve further measures to keep the Government operating and forestall a default until December, but they are attaching so many unacceptable conditions to these measures that Mr Clinton has vowed to veto them.

Mike McCurry, the White House press secretary, issued a warning that "there does not seem to be any possibility that a [spending] Bill acceptable to the President will be passed by Monday". John Kasich, the House Budget Committee chairman, said "high noon" was fast approaching.

The financial markets are treating this confrontation as a show of brinkmanship which will end — as it does most years — in a last-minute settlement. With Mr Clinton facing re-election, Mr Dole seeking the Republican presidential nomination, and Mr Gingrich constrained by a large group of backbench Republicans more radical than himself, a head-on collision is far from impossible.

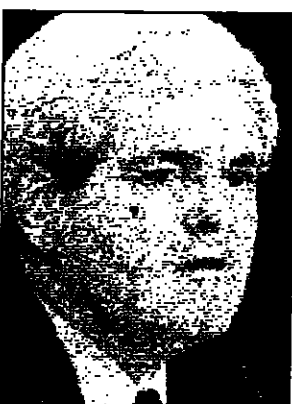
Dole is clear favourite after Powell's pullout

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

SENATOR Robert Dole yesterday became the favourite to win the presidential nomination next year after General Colin Powell's decision not to run left other Republican contenders frozen in place.

For more than two months a wide body within the Republican party had waited on tenterhooks for General Powell's decision, leaving an otherwise lacklustre field devoid of funding or support.

Thousands of supporters were left hoping that a Republican Colin Powell could broaden the base of the party enough to defeat President Clinton next year. He had said he could help the party of Lincoln move close to the spirit of Lincoln: "There are some



Newt Gingrich: will decide by December 15

to the greatest number of Americans possible."

There was no hint that he might endorse a candidate or whether he would speak at the Republican convention in San Diego next year, but both seem likely.

His departure has left Mr Dole with an almost insurmountable lead, although he still draws criticism for his age, his dull oratory and inability to show defined leadership qualities.

The focus has now switched to Newt Gingrich, who has said he will decide before the New Hampshire deadline of December 15. But many feel the House Speaker would not risk leaving such a powerful role for the rigours of the presidential campaign.

Philip Howard, page 20



General Giap and Robert McNamara met for the first time yesterday in Hanoi: the former North Vietnamese commander who defeated the US said his only bitterness was "against those who harm the Vietnamese people"

Vietnam greets an old enemy

FROM AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE IN HANOI

TWO Vietnam War foes, the former US Defence Secretary, Robert McNamara, and North Vietnam's military commander, General Vo Nguyen Giap, met for the first time yesterday.

The symbolic meeting began as General Giap, 83, the architect of the French and American defeats in Vietnam, greeted Mr McNamara with the words, "I heard about you long ago," to which Mr McNamara replied: "Needless to say, I also heard about you long ago."

Mr McNamara, 79, who played a key role in escalating a conflict that claimed

the lives of more than 58,000 American and 750,000 North Vietnamese soldiers, is in Hanoi to explore the possibility of a conference on the war next year.

General Giap said before the meeting that his only bitterness was "against those who harm the Vietnamese people", adding that the meeting was a "good opportunity to exchange ideas".

Mr McNamara was Defence Secretary under Presidents John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, from 1961 to 1968, and his own analyses at the time led to an ever deeper US involvement. However,

in his recently published book *In Retrospect*, he apologised for the war, calling it a "terrible mistake".

General Giap told Mr McNamara, "some sources said that President Kennedy intended to de-escalate, but it was difficult to do so at the time" with anti-Communist feeling running high in the US. "The domino theory is something of an illusion. Some people, even the brightest, believe in such illusions," General Giap said, in an allusion to the technocrats. Mr McNamara included, who surrounded President Kennedy.

Florida Romeo and Juliet share watery grave

BY QUENTIN LETTS

TEENAGE lovers Maryling Flores, 13, and Christian Davila, 14, killed themselves by jumping into a fast-flowing Florida waterway after being forbidden to see each other. Neither could swim.

Maryling's mother had told her to stop dating Christian because she was too young for so intense an affair. Letters left by the couple described their misery. "I'm going to a place where I can be with Christian," Maryling wrote, while Christian signed off with an

operatic quotation: "Applaud, friends. The comedy is over."

The couple, from the Miami suburb of Sweetwater, ran away from home last weekend. Their parents found the suicide notes and alerted the police. The lovers' bodies were found two days later.

Maryling had told friends she thought she was pregnant, but a pathologist disclosed she was not. She and Christian were classmates and lived near each other. A school friend recalled: "They were

always happy. They were always hugging." In her note, Maryling wrote: "Mom and Dad, You'll never be able to understand the love between me and Christian. I feel that without him I can't live. Why is it you were never able to understand me? Or is it that you live to make my life miserable? ... You don't let me see him in this world, so we're going to another place." Detective Ramon Quintero said: "It's a Romeo and Juliet story, as sad as you can find."



Maryling Flores, 13, and Christian Davila, 14

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Burglar to the rich and famous

In a small council flat, in a grim block that towers over the seedier end of Islington, a sunnied tennis bum in his mid-30s, with a build like Joe Bugner, is plotting to rob Ivana Trump. He is Peter Scott, burglar to the stars. Notorious in crime reports of the 1980s as "The Human Fly", and compared to Raffles as much for his high living as for his country-house robberies, his victims have included Lauren Bacall, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Elizabeth Taylor, John Aspinall, Sophia Loren and Maria Callas. He has now written a book, and gone straight... ish.

He still has pictures on his kitchen wall of rich women whose jewellery he plans to liberate. He carries their names, and plans the escapades in his head. "It helps to protect me from the boredom of hitting interminable tennis balls in Regent's Park for a tenner an hour," he explains.

"They wanted me to come on Clive Anderson, but only if I said I was reformed, and that I was sorry for what I had done. And I wasn't prepared to do that. They were also worried about me profiting from the book — they'd prefer me to die in abject poverty."

In *Gentleman Thief* — *Recollections of a Cat Burglar* (HarperCollins, £16.99), Scott tells the story of his campaigns, Caesar-like, in the third person. And the man whose nights on the tiles

"The publishers came up with the gentleman idea because I went to public school, and am reasonably articulate. A thief I certainly was. But never a gentleman."

Born into a military family in Ulster, he was educated at the Belfast Royal Academy where, he says, he was one of the brightest pupils. A failure in exams, he was soon walking up and down the Malone Road wearing his college scarf, with a rugby bag over his shoulder, burgling middle-class houses with impunity.

"They never suspected me," he explains, "because I looked

Giles Coren on a latterday Raffles who has robbed Bacall, Taylor and Loren but never hit anyone

like a resident. When the police eventually caught on, I had done so many jobs that they were embarrassed and only charged me with 12."

But it was not until he came to London that his career took off. "Houses in Ulster are not so suited to my profession," he says. "But the whole history of English architecture, the taste for Gothic and Baroque styles, have worked to the benefit of burglars. I sometimes got the feeling, up on the roofs of Mayfair and Belgravia, that Nash and Adam had built just for me."

He found himself in the grip of tarceny. "Ever since school I had had this self-destructive impulse. I had most things going for me. I was pleasant-looking and a great athlete, but I felt inadequate. And I found this netherworld, this Walter Mitty thing, that compensated for my low self-esteem."

'The roofs of Mayfair and Belgravia were built for me'

He quotes Oscar Wilde to illustrate his point, and goes so far as to call the book his *De Profundis*. "I am bartering my soul because of an arrogance that I share with Oscar."

He has spent 12 years in prison altogether, but claims, with a chuckle, to have done time for only 1 per cent of his crimes, "not a bad career average".

He has kept out of prison since 1988, earning a modest living as a tennis coach to rich middle-aged men, including Sir Ralph Halpern and "eminent Kuwaitis", the sort of people he would once have robbed.

He does not regret his life of crime, and has an incredible array of justifications for it, apparently drawn from some home-made moral code.

Sometimes vengeance upon the rich underscores his vocation: "I burgled Viscount Kensley's country house in 1986 in a brand new seersucker suit I had bought for the occasion. As I stood in the mud and rain, I looked through the window at the viscount and his guests having dinner, and I felt like a missionary seeing his flock for the first time." He even claims that, with hindsight, he might have been sent by God.

Then he turns to society's double standards. "The people I burgled got rich by greed and skulduggery. They indulged in the mechanics of ostentation — they deserved me and I deserved them. If I rob Ivana Trump it is just a meeting of two different kinds of degeneracy on a dark rooftop."

He also has a utilitarian explanation: "I know I have made a few people unhappy. But the thousands of working-class people who read in the paper that Lord such and such, or Sophia Loren, has been robbed of a million quid are delighted."

There is a psychoanalytic apology: "My father died when I was young, and my mother emigrated to America when she saw that I was going to be trouble. I felt abandoned." And a sociological one: "When you arrive in London at the age of 21, you do not fall in with the good people, but with the sloths and jetsams."

There is even a medical explanation: "There was a survey in which 2,000 recidivists were found to suffer from low-arousal syndrome, in which the wrong messages are sent to the front of the brain. I was a victim of that — I appeared to have no conscience about depriving people of their property."

This develops into excuse by literary allusion. "At first I felt a little guilty, but I soon got to grips with that. As Confucius said: when you do something twice it is no longer a sin. And Oscar Wilde said that if you do something behind closed doors for long enough you eventually do it in the open as if it was a right."

Wilde also provides the most likely explanation, from *De Profundis*: "It was like dealing with panthers; the danger was half the excitement."

He does not pretend it wasn't fun. "Robbing that bastard Aspinall was one of my favourites. And I enjoyed



Peter Scott: "Working-class people who read that Sophia Loren was robbed are delighted"

taking a million from the Emir of Kuwait. Sophia Loren got what she deserved, too."

"She was over here filming *The Millionaire* in 1960 and announced in the press that she was being paid in gin stones. Ostentation, you see. Well, she never took them home with her. And it was billed as Britain's biggest ever gems theft." He still has a publicity poster from the film hanging in his loo.

Then there was the Duchess

of Argyll, the Vanderbilts, Lady Profumo, Vivien Leigh and Natalie Wood. Who tipped him off? The milkman? "No, it was usually Stanley Adisman, chauffeur to the stars. He even picked me up from a job once, in Liz Taylor's Rolls-Royce, when I had been cut by a broken wheel."

Liz herself was no easy picking, though. "I tried on more than one occasion, but she ruined several men getting her gems, and protects them with her life."

Then he comes over all nostalgic: "There are no professional burglars any more. In the old days, you had to learn your trade. There was a skill to it. But modern alarm systems and security cameras have made burglars obsolete. Now there is much wider scope for amateurs, everybody has televisions and videos and carphones, which are easy

And thieves use guns. I never even hit anyone. I used to long for the past, search for a *Recherche du Temps Perdu*, but like Proust I learnt that you can't get it back. I only have the memories."

For the money is all gone. "If I had kept it I would have been like them. So I gave it away... to prostitutes, bookmakers and barmen."

He is not dissatisfied, but sad. He talks of betrayal by his friends, of the realisation that the women (including four wives) were only after the milk coats and diamonds, and of having "played in the intellectual fourth division, when I could have been in the premier league."

But his problem is not self-pity. It is his awareness of the pity he will arouse in others. "My book is about the tragic demise of a silly prat, from the high life to a dingy council flat and hitting balls with rich bastards in the park."

Ben Macintyre on this week's purge of women from the French Cabinet

Farewell to the Juppettes

NAPOLEON III once remarked that "it is the absence of women that enables men to tackle important daily questions".

The French Government appears to have rediscovered the Emperor's chauvinist maxim for, on Tuesday, just six months after appointing more women to his Cabinet than any other Prime Minister before him, Alain Juppé suddenly sacked most of them.

M Juppé's original Cabinet of 41 ministers contained 12 women. Now just four of the so-called "Juppettes" remain, alongside 28 men.

The move was oddly reminiscent of some old-fashioned Parisian dinner party. Having the women around for the early courses was all very well, but with important matters to discuss it seemed the time had come for them to leave the table and let the men get on with running the country and smoking cigars.

The response among French feminists and female politicians has been predictably irate: the Communist MP Mugette Jacquaint described the reshuffle as "scandalous", while a Euro MP Antoinette Fouque condemned what she called "a sexist purge".

Others scented cynicism on the part of M Juppé, who claimed in May that he had "feminised" the Government and made a point of posing for photographs with his dozen Juppettes (French play on words for miniskirt) gathered around him. He even set up a special commission three weeks ago to promote equality between the sexes.

M Juppé tried to defend himself yesterday by pointing out that he still has as many women in his Cabinet as his Socialist predecessors and insisting that the sackings reflected ability rather than gender. He had a point: few of the women Cabinet members distinguished themselves in the time allotted them, and some had made spectacular howlers. But so had their male counterparts, most of whom remain in office.

FRENCH politics remains a bastion of male privilege, whatever M Juppé may claim. Of the 577 MPs in the National Assembly, just 35, or 6 per cent, are women, a level far below most other European nations.

French women politicians tend to ascend quickly, burn brightly and then crash horribly, never to rise again. The fate of Edith Cresson, France's first female Prime Minister, was a case in point. Mme Cresson was hailed as "com-

petent and courageous" when she came to power, but just ten months later she was out, the victim of plunging popularity in the country and an uncanny ability to put her elegantly-shod foot in it.

"She will never be forgiven. But would one be more forgiving if she had been called Eddie?" VSD magazine asked this week.

Women politicians insist that sexism in the clunky corridors of French power. The former minister Simone Veil, still hugely popular and one of the few women to survive male-dominated French politics unbothered, is caustic on the subject. "For men, politics is like a code: they have the same way of talking, of getting along. It's like hunting. But we women, we have upset all that," she once said.

With his popularity rating still at a record low, the Prime Minister needs all the friends he can get. By sacking so many women at a single blow he has certainly alienated many French women, who wonder whether the Juppettes were only brought in for show and then ousted before they had a chance to show they were more than mere miniskirts.

Napoleon III, M Juppé might recall, ended up in ignominious exile, scorned by his countrymen and, for that matter, women.

There may be just a handful of women left in M Juppé's Government, but there are plenty more in the rest of France who will not forget what the press has dubbed "the massacre of the women".



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THE SUNDAY TIMES



MY VISION - BY BILL GATES

Billionaire, genius, enigma... Bill Gates, the driving force of the computer revolution, opens up to explain how our lives are about to be altered for ever

A BIT OF A FLUTTER

The National Lottery is a year old. And, like it or not, Britain is addicted. A special issue of the *Magazine* reviews the hullabaloo



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Philip Howard



Often the best leaders seem to be the ones that got away

So Colin Powell has decided to audition for "best President we never had". His chance of becoming real President diminished as soon as arrogant commentators started tipping him as a shoo-in. But best hypothetical President is an easier role than best President, and more glamorous, because hope and regret are more attractive emotions than disappointment, envy and boredom. Never-Never Land is the country for heroes, who do not survive for long in the mucky world of politics. Best President takes cynicism, luck, bluff and the long eye of history. Even heroic leaders such as Roosevelt and Churchill are written down by the need to whinge a new song.

Adlai Stevenson was General Powell's most recent rival for the role of best President who never made it. He was the darling of East Coast intellectuals and all who like to take their politicians with the mustard of irony. He made jokes about the disadvantages of wit, which did not play well in Peoria. During his first campaign against Eisenhower, a woman supporter said to him: "Governor, every thinking person will be voting for you." Stevenson replied: "Madam, that will not be enough. I need a majority."

After his defeat by Eisenhower in that 1952 election, he said to Alistair Cooke: "After all, who did I think I was, running against George Washington?" Four years later, Eisenhower again defeated Stevenson in the presidential election, and Cooke cabled Stevenson simply: "How now?" Stevenson replied: "Who did I think I was, running against George Washington twice?" Such self-mockers do not have the steel that wins.

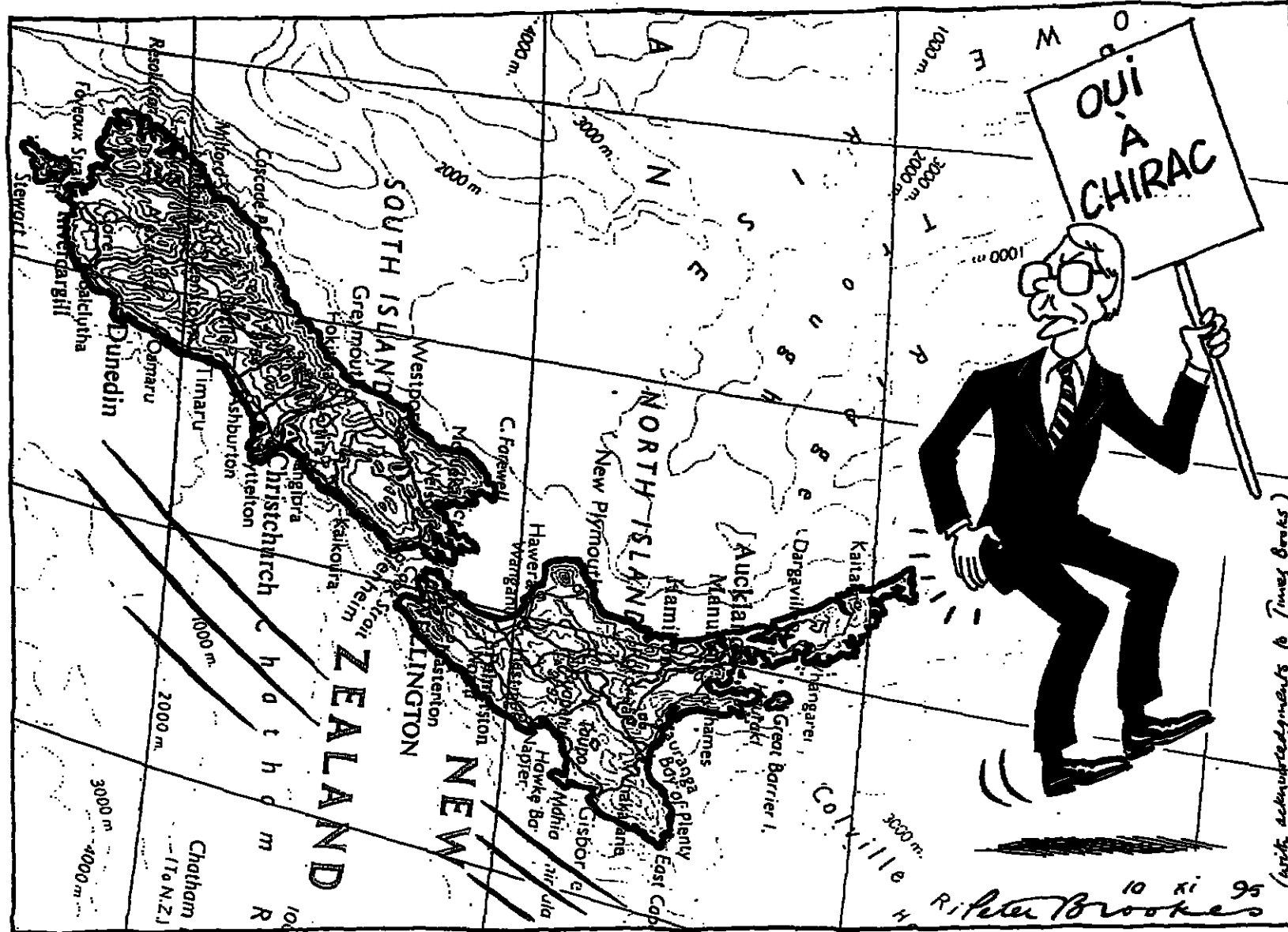
The reputations of best Prime Ministers never had last better than those of the real ones who stamped on their fingers up the greasy pole. Nobody bothers to write revisionist biographies of R.A. Butler demonstrating that he was devious and unsuccessful, though like all politicians, he was. By their early deaths, Hugh Gaitskell and Iain Macleod are preserved in the amber of unfulfilled promise. If they had actually made it to the top, they would have been tarnished by the compromise of office. It is the fate of the hero to die young and promising. The final act is always disappointing and usually bloody for winners and rulers.

According to Fortinbras, Hamlet was likely, had he been put on, to have proved most royally. But in respect of his reputation as hero, he had a good death. If Hamlet had succeeded to the throne of Denmark, and made a dynastic marriage with Fortinbras's sister, his career would have been downhill all the way through budget compromises with Polonius and diplomatic concessions to Norway, down to disappointment, discredit and death. This would have made boredom not romantic tragedy. For their reputations, Macbeth and Othello should have died heroes' deaths in battle before they came to power as king and governor. If Oedipus had failed to answer the Sphinx's riddle, he would have made a less painful entry in *Who Was Who*.

In the nick of time Lee Harvey Oswald's bullet saved Jack Kennedy's reputation as hero of Camelot, before the slow stain of Vietnam, James Dean and Wilfred Owen did their reputation as cultural heroes a favour by dying young. So did Keats, Byron and Shelley. Coleridge, Wordsworth and Frank Sinatra lived too long as kings of their professions for their reputations as princes of promise. From Alexander to Robin Hood, and from Julius Caesar to any number of Princes of Wales and vice-presidents, bright promise has turned out better than boring or disappointing practice.

We need both presidents and heroes in our societies. But heroes seldom become presidents, and when they do they soon lose their heroism. Very few, such as Gladstone and Churchill, Queen Victoria and Ike survive to be grand old men or women. If Abraham Lincoln had not been assassinated, he might well have lost some of his heroism by the rapid contagion of politics. But reconstruction after the Civil War might not have been so bitter.

Colin Powell has chosen the safer and passionless path for himself. But his choice is a disappointment for all uncynical hero-worshippers, and those who want good men, even heroes, to have a go for the top jobs.



A cover-up beyond belief

At some point, Scott is going to open his coffers, and ghastly, stinking, criminal, poisonous things will come crawling out

There is, these days, much talk (not to say a good deal of write) about sleaze. It is a good word, in the sense of immediate understanding, and it does more than elucidate the subject under discussion, for it maps out the borders of the grubby, the slightly bent, the soiled, the squalid.

Now, I did not choose those epithets at random; they mean what they say, and they say that the people those words fit are — well, let us just say that if we were prone to clichés we would call them despicable and beneath contempt. Such people can now be found squealing and snarling at the new rule which makes MPs (very many more Tories than Labour) divulge certain details of their legal but small backhanders, with which they augment their parliamentary stipends.

Some of these are saying that they will break the new rules; others seek shady ways to get round them; others again — Ted Heath for one — are keeping their hands scrupulously clean, but are bursting with rage. And all of this comes from a man called Nolan, a man whom, some three years ago, nobody had heard of, and who, very soon, will disappear just as silently and completely as he appeared.

But the name of Scott, I think, will remain longer, perhaps very much longer. Because, you see, it is one thing to cut a few corners in the matter of having to tell the public about the incomes that the MPs have; it is very much another thing to have to tell the public that the MPs have committed a crime which I hold second only to murder, and I am not exaggerating. For what I am telling you is that some of our MPs have been party to concealing documents which would have had the effect of making clear that a group of innocent men were innocent, whereas they had been for three years under the shadow of guilt, and would have been imprisoned if the belated court proceedings had not finally exculpated them.

No, we are not discussing the legal system of Nigeria. Nor are we hallooing, in thinking that we are seeing exactly the same story as that of the Matrix Churchill one; in that, a group of innocent men — and not just innocent men, but men who had been in very great peril in their undercover work for Britain — were about to be put in prison by the very people for whose benefit the certificates were drawn up.

Let us take the ordeal of Paul Greician

which was to be replicated by many of his colleagues — again, exactly the same story as the Matrix Churchill scandal. Among very many dangerous actions, Mr Greician, with almost incredible courage, wormed his way into Saddam Hussein's dreadful satrapy, to bring back knowledge vital to Britain and Britain's safety. He knew, of course, that at any moment he might be caught and die a hideous death by torture. A hero, and a hero for Britain, you would say?

But when he was charged with breaking the UN arms embargo to Iraq, he was not only abandoned by our side, but was put in a situation from which it was almost impossible for him to clear himself. Now listen to what you will be unable to believe, though it is absolutely true; when Mr Greician was at his greatest danger, an MI5 document said: "If we are not too squeamish, we might use this point to ensure silence."

Say it again, out loud. "If we are not too squeamish, we might use this point to ensure silence."

Yet again, that is not the last nor the worst. Throughout, documents which would have cleared Mr Greician and his group were hidden, though not one of the concealed papers would be in any way a danger to Britain, but the truth was that every one of those certificates existed only to keep the skins of the politicians unmarked. I tell you, one of the very first steps of the forthcoming new Labour government must be to make clear that those who demand "public interest immunity certificates" — those secrets behind which many a deal has been clinched — will be only those who can point to genuine dangers concerning the State.

And now, here they come, waving their dirty certificates: Lilley, Baker, Hurd, Howard (of course), Waldegrave (he is still arguing), the security services (which, on this showing, suggests that they have yet again been penetrated by our enemies), the Department of Trade

and Howe, who most delightfully announced that he had forgotten being warned about the diversion of military equipment for Iraq through Jordan. (Poor old Howe and his fading memory; well, he is 68, after all, and my own memory is not what it was. But it was tremendously unfortunate that it was that very bit of memory which had been blotted out by what I think is called *anno domini*.)

There is more to come, very much more, and much worse, too. What about the firms making — as they thought — harmless gyroscopes? The makers were tricked; their work was going to Iraq for missile parts. There was, rightly, a UN embargo on Iraq, but this was got round by whoever labelled the goods Dental Equipment. This highly illicit matter was, of course, criminal, and five men were arrested, but a nod and a wink did the trick from on high, and the five men were released without charge. (Better treatment than the men who risked their lives to bring back crucial news from Baghdad.)

I come back to where I should have started. In the Matrix Churchill horror, there was one crucial moment in which five wholly innocent men were about to go to prison, but there by a consortium headed by Nicholas Lyell, the Attorney-General. Only because the man who started it all, Alan Clark, blew the whistle, the innocent men could be freed again. This time, there were four innocent men, and they, too, thought that they would find themselves in prison, and so they very nearly did, until Lord Taylor of Gormthorpe, the Lord Justice, speaking from the Bench, said: "We cannot regard the convictions as safe and satisfactory."

Stop again for a moment: it was touch and go in the Matrix Churchill case, and it was touch and go in the Ordre case. And in both there were men — human beings, not animals or robots — who looked upon that knife-edged crime and didn't care that innocent men might — would — go to prison, if they would not be fingered.

The depth of corruption that this story shows is something I have not yet fully come to terms with. Oh, I know that men will do terrible things to guard themselves from shame or loss or even ridicule; but would you, reader, have believed the things that crawled out when Arms to Iraq Part Two was unveiled?

At some point, Scott is going to open his coffers, and ghastly, stinking, criminal, poisonous things will come crawling out, blinking at the light. Whatever the creatures look like, they cannot surely repeat the trick they played earlier in this story: remember? They waited for Scott to start packing up his notes, and they then poured out a huge barrelful of papers that they had been keeping back, to make him return to what he had thought might be the end.

But the cold, clear words of Lord Taylor were as a hammer to break the lies, and this is what he said: "... that the failure of ministers to disclose papers requested by lawyers for four men involved in the arms firm Ordre had prevented them from mounting proper defences at their trial ..."

And to sum up: ... some of these documents were blocked by certificates, signed by several ministers and similar to those in the Matrix Churchill trial. Others were "misleading".

Now we must wait until next year: it is said that the Scott report is going to be several hundred pages long and no one will read it. Not so, Nolan did at last put the papers on the desk, and he put them on the desk with a thump that must have shaken those MPs who had something to hide. And I believe that if Nolan could make such a stir with so tiny a trumpet-call, the Scott report is likely to blow many solid structures, once thought impregnable, into splinters.

Once upon a time, a man who had been found out in some dirty scheme was invited to take a revolver, put it in his temple and pull the trigger. We are more civilised these days, but it is difficult to find an equal to the big bang of shame. But let there be such an antidote starting us in the face. All the cheats and liars and dirty doers have only to look round and they will see what they hoped for: all of them just remaining cheats and liars and dirty dozens, with not a hair out of place.

Bernard Levin

trick from on high, and the five men were released without charge. (Better treatment than the men who risked their lives to bring back crucial news from Baghdad.)

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Don't shoot the Tory messenger

But policies need to change, argues

Peter Riddell

Director of communications at Conservative Central Office is one of the worst jobs in politics when the Tories are in office. Like all messengers, you get blamed for events outside your control and when election results are poor and the polls are bad (that is most of the time), Hugh Colver is not alone in leaving in sorrow and frustration. What is unusual is the frankness of his comments.

Mr Colver was director only for six months. But he was appointed during the low-key regime of Jeremy Hanley and did not fit in with the more aggressive style created by Brian Mawhinney since July, even though the party chairman did not want him to leave. Mr Colver is an experienced and respected public relations manager, not a street-fighting political propagandist. His role was blurred by the appointment of Tim Collins, his predecessor and now a candidate for a Tory safe seat, as a part-time media adviser to Dr Mawhinney, and by the use of four Tory MPs as briefers during last month's party conference.

These personal tensions have mattered because the Tories have been struggling to compete with Labour in the media battle. The past image of Central Office as a well-oiled and professional machine with Labour lagging behind as a "penny-farthing" has been turned on its head since the mid-1980s. Labour's organisation is now the more admired, not only for its media relations but also, for example, in its handling of the recent review of parliamentary boundaries. By contrast, Central Office has been a troubled place, beset by financial troubles, redundancies, consequent low staff morale, bickering and criticism by party activists.

Peter Mandelson, Labour's director of campaigns and communications in the second half of the 1980s, created a highly effective press and media operation which has been maintained since then under David Hill and Alastair Campbell. Tony Blair's press spokesman, Labour has actively tried to shape coverage in the most favourable way, always having a line to push and instantly reacting to events. With so many radio and television outlets, there is a premium on speed and sharpness.

The Tories have often been slow to respond and clumsy in trying to set the agenda. They have lacked edge when a big story has broken. These failings were admitted in the famous Maples memorandum, written in autumn last year by John Maples, the former Tory deputy chairman. He argued that: "The ability to react rapidly to events and Labour's allegations is vital. They are much better than us at this." The Tory performance has already started to improve, at least at the day-to-day reactive level, under the influence of Mr Colver and Mr Collins.

But any Tory media strategy is inherently constrained because the party is in government. Senior politicians spend most of their time as ministers rather than as party spokesmen. Civil servants are keen to separate the two roles. Problems of co-ordination and presentation were all too apparent during the unhappy 12 months when David Hunt was supposed to pull together the Government's case with Mr Hanley looking after the party side. But they never had enough political clout.

Michael Heseltine and Dr Mawhinney, the new top duo, have no shortage of clout in ensuring that the Government and the party work together, not least through the committee on presentation which the Deputy Prime Minister chairs on most working days. Even they, however, cannot deal with the underlying difficulty which Mr Colver identified: the belief of many ministers that they are "in office by divine right and voters will eventually see sense and rally to the flag". His complaint that "experienced ministers seemed helpless in the face of a pending crisis" rings all too true.

Government and party relations over strategy have often been tense as, for example, when Norman Tebbit was party chairman before the 1987 election. Similar frictions have occurred overseas. Martin Fitzwater, White House press secretary in the late Reagan and the Bush years, writes in his new memoirs *Call the Briefing!* how the 1992 campaign started with "a chief of staff who had never run a national race and was demonstrating a peculiar inability to make decisions, a pollster who by definition changed his mind with every new piece of information, and a businessman who had few political instincts, no experience, no supporters and no definable reason for being there".

The Tories' basic problem is not their messengers, but the message. Indeed, they are too mesmerised by Mr Mandelson and Mr Campbell. They exaggerate their impact and are too eager to believe that if they could find a Tory version, a media Merlin, everything would be fine. But as Professor Dennis Kavanagh, who has close knowledge of party media strategies, has written in his *Election Campaigning*, "the product matters more than the presentation".

He quotes Shaun Woodward, the often criticised Tory director of communications at the last election: "No matter how skilled the presentation and publicity, we would not have won in 1992 without the political fundamentals changing from 1990." That is the uncomfortable predicament facing Mr Colver's successor, whoever is bold, or foolhardy, enough to take the job.

Hezza's share

HAVING escaped the attentions of Lord Nolan and his "clean-up" team, Michael Heseltine may now be forced to reveal details of his personal wealth in court. For the multimillionaire has unwittingly become embroiled in a divorce case involving Lindsay Masters, the £275,000-a-year chairman of Haymarket Publishing Group, and his Italian-born wife of 33 years, Marisa.

The couple are disputing the value of Masters's shares in the privately-owned group of which Heseltine and his family are majority shareholders.

Judged by the recently announced profits, the Hezzas could receive up to £1.3 million in dividends this year, although Heseltine himself resigned all his directorships on taking up ministerial office.

Now the lawyers want to order Heseltine to attend court and provide details of his holdings to help to determine Masters's assets in the group. Insiders believe Hezza may escape a personal hearing, but could well be required to produce the documents.

Hezza's press officer, Mike Horne, insists that his boss has no

involvement in running the company and is "one step removed". "I have no idea if Mr Heseltine has been contacted in relation to this case," he says.

Short cut

WHILE Tory councillors may be thin on the ground, those remaining of the faith were not uplified by



"It's the first I've heard of it"

the performance of Local Government Minister Sir Paul Beresford at the Association of County Councils' annual conference in Buxton.

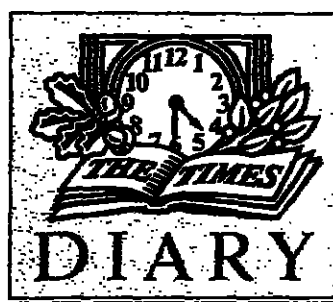
On arriving late because of road works, Beresford gave only an outline of his speech instead of the text, and then answered a few questions. "Now you know it only takes 15 minutes to explain Tory party policy," quipped one delegate.

Soupa stuff

ANTONIO CARLUCCIO, owner of the eponymous Italian food shop and the truffle-snuffing Neal Street Restaurant in Covent Garden, is sizzling with excitement over his latest enterprise — a ballet.

"It will be called the Ballet of the Mushrooms," enthuses Carluccio. The Prince of Wales is supporting him and he has roped in André Previn as conductor and composer, a team of Russian violinists, and Jasper Conran to design fungi-shaped costumes.

"The world wouldn't survive without the mushroom," says Carluccio, just voted Host of the Year by Egon Ronay's guidebooks. "We have both the good and the bad mushroom. But the ballet will start with the most 'villainous' of the mushrooms — the atomic bomb."



My report of canine shenanigans at Tatler prompted howls of derision from Country Life where dog baskets threaten to outnumber desks. Only last week the deputy editor disentangled the sale-room correspondent's aggressive Jack Russell, Waller, from Bella, an elegant black Labrador, belonging to fashion correspondent Countess Jennifer Guerin. Maraldi. "Waller was so cross that he simply relieved himself before returning to the fray," says a source.

Line engaged

SPEAKING at the Dorchester on Wednesday night, Jean Charest, leader of Canada's Tory party, which has been down to two MPs since the last election, could not resist exploiting his Prime Minister

Jean Charest's discomfiture over the bogus telephone call.

"I have just been to see Lady Thatcher," Charest told the Canada Club members. "My aides tried to fix up a meeting with the Queen, but it appears that Buckingham Palace is not taking any calls from Canada."

Flying doctors

PROFESSOR Angus Wallace and Dr Tom Wong, winners of the People of the Year Award 1995, were delighted to receive a letter from Health Minister Gerry Malone. He congratulated them on saving the life of a woman with a collapsed lung using a coast-hanger, mineral water bottle, tubing, Sellotape and brandy while on a flight between Hong Kong and London. He then suggested that their novel technique could be adapted to save the NHS some money. Wallace, clad in a kilt at Wednesday's awards, said: "He was joking, of course."

Young bloods

THE MAN who has made a killing from sinking his teeth into the lily-white necks of maidens is to be let loose on 80 of the world's fairest women. Christopher Lee is

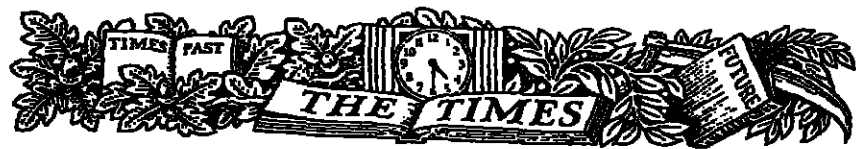


Christopher Lee: Miss World

off to South Africa to judge the Miss World competition.

The star of countless Dracula films was relishing the task at a champagne party on Wednesday night, before switching on the Christmas lights in Knightsbridge. "It should be delightful to be surrounded by so many different cultures," he boomed.

P.H.S



COMMON ACTION

Blair's nostalgia is no help to Commonwealth policy

The Commonwealth summit which opens today in Auckland is the first for three decades at which South Africa is cause only for celebration. Relieved of the relentless politics of the anti-apartheid movement, the assembled heads of state should seize their moment. Postcolonial timidity about the rights of governments to hound subjects to quiet graves has weakened the Commonwealth since the 1960s. It is high time to give this strange club a firmer foundation, as an organisation, based on rules, that lives up to Balfour's original vision in 1926 of a Commonwealth "united around free institutions".

At Auckland, the test case is Nigeria. For more than a decade, the country has been oppressed by vicious, illegal, incompetent and corrupt military regimes which fall foul in every particular of the 1991 Harare Declaration committing Commonwealth governments to "democracy, the rule of law, just and honest government and human rights". Infractions of these principles are legion: Kenya is just one prominent case. But Nigeria is in a league of its own. By confirming the latest in a long string of death sentences on political opponents on the eve of the summit, the current dictator, General Sani Abacha, has finally persuaded even John Major, who has clung too long to the mantra that quiet diplomacy will work its magic, of the case for suspending Nigeria.

General Abacha has also exposed the Commonwealth's enduring weak spot: the absence of established procedures for suspending or expelling members. To take such action against Nigeria would be unprecedented. South Africa, along with Pakistan and Fiji, which has not returned, withdrew of their own accord. The Commonwealth works by consensus and, with both Nelson Mandela and Malaysia's Mahathir Mohamed opposed to going beyond the rhetoric for which the Commonwealth has an unenviable reputation, the odds are on another Commonwealth compromise.

By comparison, the dispute over France's final nuclear tests is a side-issue. The Com-

monwealth has survived more serious quarrels than this by agreeing to disagree and heads of government should put it speedily to one side. Mr Major has solid reasons for standing his ground in Auckland, and Tony Blair's gibes about Britain's "isolation" on this issue unites the latent preacher in the Labour leader with ill-judged opportunism. Still more depressing is Mr Blair's string of platitudes about the "priceless legacy" of a "common language and common cultural roots" able to "bring together North and South". Common history, language and legal traditions are worth only what is made of such links. It is Mr Blair, not the Prime Minister, who is guilty of "nostalgia" when he says that the Commonwealth "could play a key part" in British foreign policy. So diffuse an association could never be that. But it could, at long last, develop into an effective auxiliary vehicle for the promotion of decent government in its 52 states.

That would be an advance on the present state of affairs. The Commonwealth certainly contains some of the world's fastest-growing countries; but trade can be promoted through other channels, and it also harbours some of the worst-governed. There is nothing "priceless" about its record of almost unflinching courtesy towards the dictators in its midst. To help the increasingly vocal and indisputably courageous campaigners in these countries, it needs a procedure which binds governments to obligations on human rights and economic co-operation, monitors their performance and penalises infractions.

Above all, in Auckland, it needs to deal severely with Nigeria. The Commonwealth has become too like Brazil: its supporters constantly speak of its potential because there is little to praise in its actual performance. If it has value for the post-Cold War world, it cannot go on lending spurious respectability to vile governments. It numbers a quarter of the world's people; its claims to support and respect must rest on its relevance to their common weal.

BACK TO INFLATION

Yeltsin has jeopardised one of his few genuine achievements

Boris Yeltsin's decision this week to sack Russia's central bank governor was presented as evidence that the bed-ridden President still has his hands on the levers of power. But the real result of this action could be to endanger one of the few genuine achievements of Mr Yeltsin's four years in control: the creation of a reasonably stable and reliable currency which Russian savers and businessmen were finally beginning to trust.

Within months of her appointment in October last year, the austere and doggedly anti-inflationary Tatyana Paramonova managed to turn the rouble from despised and worthless token of the Yeltsin regime's economic incompetence into a worthwhile currency which actually rose sharply in the foreign exchanges against the dollar and the German mark. Mrs Paramonova achieved this stabilisation by the time-honoured expedient of turning off the printing presses which under her predecessors had been spewing out worthless confetti money virtually without limit. Needless to say this previously unthinkable action made the central bank governor unpopular, especially among the coterie of bankers, industrial managers and mafia godfathers who were being enriched beyond the dreams of avarice because of their privileged access to cheap credit.

These privileged groups, were able to ensure that parliament never formally confirmed Mrs Paramonova in her position, despite initially strong support from Mr Yeltsin. Now either President Yeltsin or his plenipotentiary Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, has decided to sacrifice their "acting" central banker, presumably in the hope of easing monetary policy in time for the elections due in December and next July. Western bankers and economic officials

seem not to have been too shocked by Mrs Paramonova's dismissal. They have taken comfort in the programme agreed between the Russian Government and the IMF, which will supposedly ensure that economic policy remains on course. They have pointed out that Mrs Paramonova had serious failings as a manager and have even expressed some sympathy with the astonishing justifications offered yesterday by one of Mr Yeltsin's parliamentary supporters — that in a shamelessly sexist society, a woman was unable to hold down such an important post.

The reality, however, is probably even worse. The Russian political and business establishment grouped around Mr Yeltsin are clearly terrified by the impending elections, especially with the President too ill to rally support from the bitter and disillusioned public. They probably calculate that the austere monetary conditions demanded by the IMF and eagerly implemented by Mrs Paramonova can now be forgotten. Surely the West will not begrudge a few billion dollars, even if Russia breaks its IMF agreements, in order to help Mr Yeltsin in his hour of need.

If this is the Russians' calculation, the West ought to prove them wrong. Anything can happen in Russian politics, but the most likely outcome of the coming elections may well be to return the Communists to power — whether or not the West supports Mr Yeltsin. Under these circumstances, the West would perhaps be wiser to consider how it could coexist with a Russia ruled by reconstituted Communists than to pour vast amounts of money into a black hole of Russian hyperinflation in the vague hope of keeping the "right people" in power.

TUSK TASK

Asia's clever elephants are in grave danger

There is an old elephant-watcher's memory aid which is worth repeating here: the African elephant has ears shaped like the continent of Africa, the Asian animal like the map of India (with Kashmir, by the forehead, nicely fudged). That is not the only difference, as any mahout worth his salt will tell you: the African pachyderm, *Loxodonta africana*, is the largest of all land animals; the Asian, *Elephas maximus*, is considerably smaller, although "small" is hardly the word which springs first to the awed mind.

There is more. The African beast is, well, pretty beast-like in its attitude to man: its domestication is rare, and little use was ever made of it in bygone wars — when tanks were made of hide and tusk. The Asian elephant, on the other hand, has for long been used to shift timber and tourists about. And in spite of its apparent gentleness, warriors from Hannibal to the Great Moguls have lurched grandly into battle on its caparisoned back. But for all their obvious differences, the African and Asian elephants seem to share a depressing destiny: both are in danger of extinction.

The fate of the African elephant has attracted universal concern for many years. The cruelty of ivory-poachers has cut a now, The cruelty of the Asian elephant may prove hard to extricate from the problems of those people who share their land.

highlight the abjectness of its decline. Yet the decline of its Asian cousin has been just as dramatic: as the 1995 World Wildlife Fund Species Report, published yesterday, describes, its numbers may now be as low as 34,000 — or less than one-tenth of the estimated African total. The Asian elephant, once the lord of jungles from modern Iraq to China, now lives in exiguous clusters in the lands between India and Vietnam. Deforestation, agriculture and the immense pressure of Asian populations have corralled the elephant into an ever-shrinking space — and led to what may be an irreversible decline.

Half tractor, half god, the Asian elephant lived in harmony until recently with neighbouring human beings. Now new technology has reduced the animal's utility. But technology is only part of the story: the Indian sub-continent, where the elephant is found in the largest number, is also the most densely populated region in the world. Where there is such pressure for land on which to grow food, what chance has the elephant? It is easy to say that forests must not be cut, and that the elephants must be allowed space in which to thrive: but richer governments must help their poorer counterparts to keep the elephant alive. The plight of the Asian elephant may prove hard to extricate from the problems of those people who share their land.

Constitutional lessons to learn in light of Nolan report

From Major-General T. D. G. Quayle (ret'd)

Sir, Simon Jenkins's "A place for advocates" (November 8) sits comfortably with my leader urging a review of MPs' salaries to ensure that "the right people become our representatives in Parliament".

Informed, if not expert contributions to debate are essential if the House of Commons is to have a meaningful role in developing policy. Where MPs have any sort of vested interest in the result, this should be made clear, and the House should be reminded by each individual when speaking.

Is there merit, though, in establishing a Commons where a distinction is drawn between constituency MPs with a clear primary duty to represent the interests of a geographical constituency, while able to contribute to any debate; and MPs without any such constituency ties, chosen by their parties precisely for their ability to bring a broader perspective to debate and committee — both groups operating under the disclosure criteria above.

Germany's Bundestag is so constituted, with the former group elected on a first-past-the-post basis in their individual constituencies, the latter by proportional representation from lists prepared by each of the political parties.

The ratio in the House of Commons of one to the other, and how to achieve this (a reduction in the number of constituencies, perhaps to mirror Euro-constituencies, would seem inevitable), are matters for further debate; but the principle deserves a further airing in the aftermath of Nolan.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID QUAYLE,
Penruddock Cottage,
Dinton, Salisbury, Wiltshire.
November 8.

From Mr Charles Miller

Sir, In the aftermath of MPs' decision to disclose consultancy earnings and ban paid advocacy, it may be thought that professional lobbyists are only now starting to shed their financial links with MPs. In fact, as Mr Ian Greer pointed out (report, November 8), most professional advisers have never made such payments in any form.

Our body, the Association of Professional Political Consultants, which regulates all the largest firms and which accounts for around 70 per cent of the sector's revenue, has always banned any financial connection with MPs on the basis that a clear conflict exists where those who earn their living from working with the institutions of government make payments to anyone working within those institutions.

We put this view to Nolan and it was accepted: we now look to the House, which encouraged our forma-

tion, to give a self-regulatory system the formal status needed if it wishes strict ethical standards to apply to all professional lobbyists.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES MILLER (Secretary),
Association of Professional
Political Consultants,
50 Rochester Row, SW1,
November 8.

From Mr John Parfitt

Sir, Pace Peter Riddell ("Nolan is not enough", November 6), Westminster has not lost power: it has abdicated responsibility, a much more contemptible thing.

The remedy is in its own hands: nowhere else.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
JOHN PARFITT,
St Andrews, New Street,
Painwick, Gloucestershire.

From Ms Lesley Abдела

Sir, What is missing from the acrimonious and frankly degrading debate within a House of Commons desperate to regain public trust is a simple career structure for Members of Parliament.

MPs are under very serious pressure at the thought of losing their seats at any given general election, but many stay in the House for decades, doing valuable work as backbenchers (only about 100 at any time can be in the government itself) and on standing and select committees. Yet their remuneration stays exactly the same as any neophyte Member.

It is hard to conceive of any organisation in the private sector which would so conspicuously fail to reward employees for commitment, extra duties, and the accrual of expertise over the years.

May I suggest that backbenchers' income rises according to length of

Standards in Lords

From the Earl of Carnarvon

Sir, Whilst welcoming the Griffiths proposals on peers' declaring advisory posts and consultancies, I must take public issue with the innuendo in the Channel 4 documentary *Dispatches*, screened on November 1 and outlined in advance in your report on the same day, that the House of Lords is rife with undeclared self-interest and unacceptable standards.

The programme suggested that my question in the House on January 24, 1995, initiated a debate on the A34 Newbury bypass and that either I or my family could expect to profit by the development of land adjoining the line of the bypass. No reference was made to the fact that I have been chairman of the South East Regional Planning Conference since 1989 and, as such, have a duty to speak on economic and planning issues such as road building in that area.

Divided counsel?

From Dr Christopher Williams

Sir, At the Commonwealth Conference John Major has supported the opponents of environmental damage in Nigeria and the perpetrators of environmental damage in France (reports, November 9). Neither view appears credible when the lack of consistency suggests that his judgment is based on expediency not integrity.

Yours sincerely,
C. WILLIAMS,
Environmental Victims Project,
Global Security Programme,
Botolph House,
Botolph Claydon, Norfolk.
November 9.

Malagasy tragedy

From Ms Hilary Bradt

Sir, Those who know and love Madagascar will be saddened to hear that the Rova, the Queen's Palace in Antananarivo, was completely destroyed by fire on the night of November 7.

The collection of buildings which it comprised was a Unesco World Heritage site: Madagascar's only notable historic monument, a museum which housed a large collection of unique antiquities and royal memorabilia. Several of the exhibits were gold and silverware presented by Queen Victoria to King Radama during the period of British influence in Madagascar.

It is hard to convey the extent of this tragedy. In British terms it would be similar to Westminster Abbey being destroyed along with the Tower of London. The monetary loss alone is inestimable but the spiritual value is something we cannot comprehend.

Here were the tombs of all the kings and queens of Madagascar, and in Madagascar the power of the ancestors is considered stronger than that of any living person. The bones of the ancestors are the physical representation of this power. And these bones have now gone.

I can think of no greater tragedy for the Malagasy people.

Yours sincerely,
HILARY BRADT,
Grey House (Flat),
Beeches Drive, Farnham Common,
Buckinghamshire.
November 8.

Sports letters, page 44

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Business letters, page 29

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Forces' ban on homosexuals

From Mr Tim Beach

Sir, Perhaps the most encouraging feature of the appeal against the Forces' homosexual ban (report, November 4; Law Report, November 6; letter, November 8) was the intimation given by the Master of the Rolls that the needs of military life may be met by a strict code of conduct rather than a blanket ban on a particular group.

To pass judgment against anyone because he or she belongs to a group, instead of judging people separately according to their own conduct, denies the rights of the individual. That was the essence of Nazism and apartheid, and as long as any form of group judgment is allowed to continue, the members of any identifiable group may one day find themselves judged not according to their own actions, but according to other people's prejudices.

Of course, the military authorities can still maintain they have followed the ruling of Parliament. It was Parliament's error, not so much as to misjudge homosexuals as to pass collective judgment on them at all. Transferring a collective judgment to the individual case is automatically an act of prejudice. The constitutional question is whether our law courts have the right to overrule Parliament once it has committed an injustice. The Appeal Court seems to have sidestepped this issue. If the Lords do not pick up the ball, Strasbourg can be expected to do so. But how ironic if British liberties can now only be defended by European institutions.

Yours faithfully,
TIM BEACH,
19 Station Road, SE25,
November 8.

From Mr W. E. Vaughan

Sir, Your Law Report today reports the decision of the Court of Appeal in the case of the Forces' ban on homosexuals. The matter is no doubt important; but is the court procedure such that it is necessary to employ three judges, ten barristers, four firms of solicitors and the Treasury Solicitor to decide the law (and perhaps only temporarily)?

Yours faithfully,
W. E. VAUGHAN,
Chobham Farm Cottage,
Philpot Lane, Chobham, Surrey.
November 6.

Speed of justice

From Mr Neville Whitton

Sir, Libby Purves ("Protecting the innocents", November 7) says that "the... idea that justice should be dispensed swiftly has become buried under a mound of paperwork".

Not so. Last week, I prosecuted a young man for theft committed on October 27. A full file of evidence was available in less than a week, sufficient for the case to proceed to plea.

Justice is not like a bus-service, each case must run to its own timetable.

Yours etc,
NEVILLE WHITTON,
(Senior Crown Prosecutor),
2 King Edward Court, Nottingham.
November 7.

Head's departure

From Mr D. E. P. Hughes

Sir, Although he has the support of many parents, the Master of Dulwich College has been forced to take early retirement (report, November 3). Under these circumstances, it is difficult to justify the payment of any settlement out of school income, most of which comes from fees paid by the parents. If governors of schools want to get rid of the head, and they have not obtained the full support of the parents, then surely it is they, the governors, who ought to finance any settlement.

Yours faithfully,
PETER HUGHES,
Flat 1, 63 Millbank, SW1.

Keeping up courtesies

From Mr Christopher Nells

Sir, As a child I regarded elderly people as upholders of the standards of common courtesy and behaviour towards others. Now, in our thirties, my wife and I increasingly observe that senior citizens are displaying poor manners. They often fail to acknowledge a door held open or the offer of a seat on a train; we are regularly jostled in queues by "oldies" who appear unwilling to wait their turn.

Have I become intolerant or is the present generation of senior citizens less polite?

Yours faithfully,
CHRIS NELMS,
23 Lavershoke Lane,
Lavershoke, Whitchurch, Hampshire.

Job opportunity

From Mrs Pamela Morgan

Sir, Do you think Boris Yeltsin's attention should be drawn to an advertisement in your appointments section of today, which was headed "Country Manager — Russia. Based Moscow"?

Yours faithfully,
PAMELA MORGAN,
9 Winterstone Gardens, NW7,
November 9.



ARTS 35-37
Tom Higgins is one of the gentle losers in a fine new play



EDUCATION 39
How good school discipline can improve results



SPORT 42-48
Clement Freud on an Irishman with the golden touch

TELEVISION AND RADIO GUIDE
Pages 46, 47

THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 10 1995

Callers defect from BT to cable

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH TELECOM has started to lose household customers to cable company rivals for the first time since it was privatised 11 years ago.

Although some subsequently return to BT, the net loss of customers is now running at 30,000 a month, Sir Iain Vallance, the group's chairman, said.

But BT is preparing a vigorous response to the rising challenge from the cable companies, which, unlike BT, are allowed to deliver broadcast television programmes as well as to handle telephone calls.

Last month, the Labour Party announced that it would allow BT to deliver broadcast entertainment in return for the company linking all schools, colleges and hospitals to the Internet.

A host of new products will be offered during the coming months, ranging from connections to the Internet, or information super-highway, to telephone answering services provided at the local exchange.

BT will also cut call charges by a further £15 billion before the present regulatory price control regime ends on July 31, 1997.

Increasing competition and tough price controls limited profit growth at Britain's dominant phone company during the first half.

BT generated cash at an extraordinary rate nonetheless. Pre-tax profits increased 7.56 per cent to £1.61 billion, on revenues ahead just 2.9



Height of fashion: Andrew Higginson, left, finance director, and John Hoerner, chief executive, yesterday announced that Burton Group had bucked the trend in the clothing retail sector with a huge jump in profits to £98 million from £41.1 million (Alasdair Murray writes). The group owns high street chains such as Top Shop, Principles and Dorothy Perkins.

The company also announced a promising start to the year with sales 4.4 per cent ahead and gross margins up 2.2 per cent in the first nine weeks of trading. But Mr Hoerner sounded a note of caution about future performance, saying that if other retailers were forced to cut prices in the weeks leading up to Christmas, Burton

Burton puts on the style with £57m profits rise

might have to follow. He said: "The retail climate has been tough and when the market is tough it can behave unpredictably. We will try not to change our policy of selling at prime prices but we cannot rule it out."

The company's strategy of moving away from discounting to achieve improved margins through prime sales appeared vindicated by yesterday's results. The group traded prime for 68 per cent of the year, compared with only 33 per cent the year before, and margins were up 3.7 per cent, although sales declined 0.7 per cent.

Debenhams, the department store chain, reported an especially strong performance. Profits were up £10.5 million to £82 million, while sales grew 2.3 per cent. Top Shop also made a good improvement to register an £8.5 million profit, compared with a £7.2 million loss last year.

Burton menswear and Principles, the loss-making subsidiaries, also improved their performance. At Burton's, losses were down from £12.4 million to £4.2 million, although sales continued to decline, while Principles reduced losses to £2 million from £19.4 million. Only Dorothy Perkins suffered a decline as a £4 million revamp of the stores reduced profits from £11.4 million to £4.1 million.

Burton also announced a deal to buy the Oxford Circus building used by its flagship Top Shop store for £94.5 million.

The dividend will be 2.2p, up 10 per cent, the first increase for three years. The shares closed 5p up at 110p.

Tempus, page 28

British work longer with less days lost

BRITONS work longer hours than the average European, are much less prone to taking industrial action and help to attract more inward investment than any other European country (Janet Bush writes).

The findings come from the first joint study by the Central Statistical Office and Eurostat, from the European Commission.

The average number of hours worked by full-time employees in Britain in 1993 was 41 compared with 39.6 in the EU and it has the second-highest proportion of people working, at 61.9 per cent, beaten only by Denmark with 67.4 per cent.

Only 34 days were lost per 1,000 employees in 1991 against 104 in all the EU.

4pm time limit, page 29

Hopes rise for Christmas spending spree

High street sales surge

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

HIGH street sales are showing their best growth for six months, according to new figures today from the Confederation of British Industry.

Business leaders hope that the sharp pickup in retail sales signalled by the latest CBI distributive trends survey today will lead to consumers stepping up their spending in the run-up to Christmas. Higher retail sales in October follow flat and falling sales in the two previous months, according to the findings of more than 530 retailers, wholesalers and motor traders.

Forty-four per cent of retailers say sales volumes were up on a year ago, with 28 per cent reporting that they were down, giving a positive balance between the two of 16 per cent. Though the rise in sales volumes is less than was expected, it is the largest since April, and follows a zero balance in September and falling sales, with a balance of minus 7 per cent in August.

High street retailers expect further growth in sales in November, with a balance of 21 per cent saying sales will go up — though the CBI points out that retailers' expectations have not been realised in nine out of the past 12 months.

CBI analysts say that the improved figures for October mean that the three-month underlying average of retail sales volumes now suggests that high street sales have resumed a modestly upward path, though sales for this time of the year are still considered to be below average. Booksellers, stationers and chemists showed the biggest increases in sales volumes, while specialist food shops and clothing stores saw the sharpest falls.

Alastair Eperon, chairman of the CBI's distributive trades panel, says today that the upturn in retail sales is "encouraging" and shows that underlying high street sales are once again "drifting up".

He hopes that "the competitive trading environment is now encouraging previously cautious consumers to step up their spending in the critical pre-Christmas period."

Wholesalers' annual vol-

umes rose strongly in the year to October, though annual sales for motor traders fell markedly. Looking at the three sectors together, total distributive trades showed a rise in sales volumes overall in line with expectations and at a balance of 24 per cent, at a similar rate to September.

Small firms believe that the first priority for the Government in helping to promote competitiveness for small business should be to provide economic stability. But a survey today from the British Chambers of Commerce on the competitiveness of small firms shows that their second most important priority for government action is legislation on late payment of debt.

Pain barrier, page 29

States, have shared a \$6 billion order for 61 larger jets after lobbying from President Clinton.

The Saudi order may give BAE an opportunity to launch a long-range version of the RJ, its modernised BAe146 "whisper jet". The new version, aimed at the top of the corporate jet market, would be able to fly from London to the Gulf non-stop.

Rolling stock sale, page 1

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FT-SE 100	3541.8	(+4.5)
Yield	4.62%	
FT-SE All share	1739.53	(+1.82)
Nikkei	17821.04	(-12.25)
New York		
Dow Jones	4856.64	(+3.97)
S&P Composite	591.72	(+0.01)

US RATE

Federal Funds	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Long Bond	107 1/8%	(108 1/8%)
Yield	6.29%	(6.25%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	6 1/4%	(6 1/4%)
Life long gilt	107 1/8%	(108 1/8%)

STERLING

New York	1.5800*	(1.5796)
London	1.5797	(1.5806)
DM	2.2301	(2.2428)
FF	7.6910	(7.7155)
Sfr	1.8105	(1.8079)
Yen	159.15	(159.07)
£ Index	84.1	(84.3)

\$\$\$ DOLLAR

London	1.4115*	(1.4220)
DM	4.8628*	(4.8945)
FF	1.1380*	(1.1480)
Sfr	100.76*	(102.50)
Yen	83.0	(83.3)

Tokyo close Yen 102.35

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Jan)	\$16.35	(\$16.40)
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GOULD

London close	\$385.05	(\$385.10)
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* denotes midday trading price

Venture cash set to pour into railways

By JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

ANALYSTS expect a flood of private capital to pour into Britain's underinvested railways after yesterday's successful £1.8 billion sale of the three rolling stock leasing companies (Roscos).

The deal is being seen as a crucial milestone in the faltering rail sell-off.

Ownership of the 11,000 train fleet was divided between the three companies to create a competitive market in rolling stock and locomotive leasing. Train operators have entered into eight-year to ten-year lease agreements with the Roscos, which will be responsible for their heavy maintenance.

Other leasing companies, such as GE Capital and the high street banks, as well as train manufacturers, are expected to seek their own deals with train companies.

The three Roscos are: □ Angel Train Contracts, sold for £672.5 million to GRS Holding Company, a consortium led by the London arm of Nomura, the world's largest securities house, and Babcock & Brown, a leasing and project finance house.

□ Eversholt Leasing, a management and employee buyout backed by Candover and Electra Fleming as its lead equity investors. It was bought for £500 million, with a further £80 million deferred.

□ Porterbrook Leasing Company, also a management and employee buyout. Charterhouse Development Capital provided the equity for the £565 million deal.

Fund manager fined a year's profits

By ROBERT MILLER

A LEADING City watchdog has fined one of its members £80,000 — more than a year's worth of profits — for a number of serious rule breaches over a period of 2½ years.

Imro, the regulator for fund managers, also ordered Warne Investment and Financial Services, which has £100 million under management and 750 clients, to pay an extra £25,000 in costs.

The fine is the highest of the 11 levied by Imro so far this year, which total £380,000, and is understood to reflect the serious nature of the eight charges. It also takes note of the fact that customers of Warne, which is part of the James Finlay banking group, were disadvantaged. It is understood that no Warne staff have lost their jobs as a result of the breaches.

The charges of which Warne was found guilty include the matter of staff dealing on behalf of relatives to the detriment of customers and acting as underwriter to Burnfield when it came to the stock market on August 6, 1992. Shares were then sold on to some 20 customers at a

higher price than the firm paid for them without investors' knowledge. Imro said that Warne took underwriting commission on the Burnfield issue without clients being aware of this fact. Warne staff also bought and sold shares in personal transactions with customers. The offences took place variously between November 1991 and May 1994.

William Stevens, managing director of Warne, which has also paid out more than £7,000 in compensation to investors, said: "Last year we made a profit of £70,647. I know the offences are serious, but we have

been a very conservative company in spite of what you see. Now we are penalised by Imro for being financially strong, and that to me is pretty unfair."

Mr Stevens added that after Warne joined Imro in 1991, having transferred from membership of Fimbra, the then regulator for independent financial advisers, the firm received a routine visit from the watchdog's compliance department. He said: "They went away without any reference to us and did not contact us again for a very long time. We have co-operated fully with Imro."

BAe on brink of \$250m Saudi order for Avro jet

By OUR INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH AEROSPACE is poised to win a \$250 million order from Saudi Arabian Airlines (Saudia) for ten Avro RJ85 regional jets. John Schofield, Avro vice-president, said in Dubai: "We are talking to Saudia and we are very close to a deal."

A Saudia order would be some reward to the UK aerospace industry for Britain's role in the Gulf War against Iraq. Boeing and McDonnell Douglas, of the United

States, have shared a \$6 billion order for 61 larger jets after lobbying from President Clinton.

The Saudi order may give BAE an opportunity to launch a long-range version of the RJ, its modernised BAe146 "whisper jet". The new version, aimed at the top of the corporate jet market, would be able to fly from London to the Gulf non-stop.

Pain barrier, page 29

MORSE

ULTRA

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Labour's pledge to lenders

By ANNE ASHWORTH

ALISTAIR DARLING, Labour's City spokesman, yesterday pledged a new deal for building societies, giving them powers to break into new markets. But he wants to see only loyal savers benefit from payouts at takeovers and mergers.

Speaking at the Building Societies Association annual lunch, Mr Darling, MP for Edinburgh Central, said Labour favoured "a permissive structure for building societies. We believe in diversity. Societies must be allowed to compete, along with the rest of the financial services sector".

The proposal that only members who had been with a society for a set period should be entitled to share in the takeover bounty met with the approval of his audience of building society bosses.

Earlier, Ken Culley, chairman of the Building Societies Association, was applauded for his criticism of the "loopholes and inconsistencies" in the current rules. Although these were drafted to allow only members of two years' standing to receive payouts, the courts have interpreted them differently.

Referring to savers who open building society accounts in the hope of a quick profit, Mr Culley said: "Our industry does not want to be hijacked by bounty hunters and asset strippers."

City diary, page 29

TOURIST RATES

	Bank of America	Bank of England
Australia \$	2.23	2.07
Austria Sch	18.82	15.32
Belgium Fr	40.22	44.32
Canada C\$	2.342	2.082
Cyprus Cyp£	0.753	0.898
Denmark Kr	8.32	8.52
Finland Mk	7.31	6.68
France Fr	8.14	7.49
Germany DM	2.40	2.19
Greece Dr	365.00	360.00
Hong Kong \$	12.84	11.84
Ireland P	1.55	0.95
Israel Sh	5.160	4.5100
Italy Lit	2615.00	2480.00
Japan Yen	175.30	159.50
Malta	0.596	0.541
Netherlands Gld	2.670	2.440
New Zealand \$	2.56	2.34
Norway Kr	10.49	9.69
Portugal Esc	247.00	228.50
S Africa Rd	1.42	1.27
Spain Ptas	200.50	187.50
Sweden Kr	11.16	10.36
Switzerland Fr	1.55	1.77
Turkey Lira	refer	7950.00
USA \$	1.675	1.545

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.



Alistair Darling offers building societies freedom but believes only loyal savers should be rewarded

Quinn criticises Japan's banks over accounting

By PATRICIA TEHAN, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

BRIAN QUINN, the Bank of England director in charge of supervision, has given a stern warning to the Japanese banking community over its accounting and reporting practices, which fail to meet international standards.

The Japanese banking crisis brought about by bad debts on property loans has hit confidence in Tokyo financial institutions; banks have to pay a premium to raise funds in international markets.

Mr Quinn was visiting Tokyo as part of an annual meeting between UK and

Japanese banking supervisors. Speaking at the Japanese Capital Markets Research Institute yesterday, he said Japan had failed to move closer to adopting the accounting and reporting practices set out in the Basle Capital Accord of 1988. This, he said, had "adverse consequences for the confidence the markets have in Japanese institutions".

He added that the relationship between Japan's commercial banks and the financial authorities also needs to change. He said: "A more open market place should...

mean greater freedom for the banks to make their own judgments on matters such as provisions for loss, reflecting the different circumstances of individual institutions."

He said Japan's problem was largely a matter of management and political will, adding: "A resolute and open approach to the current problems will go a long way to restoring the reputation of Japan's financial system."

On the subject of the role of a banking supervisor, he said that in spite of the Barings collapse and the Daiwa losses,

supervisors cannot be sure that bank managements will have taken the lessons to heart without exception.

He said banks had come to realise that their balance sheets carry risks and were trying to manage those risks, but their customers "appear still to believe they can enjoy the greater choice and keener pricing that competition brings while avoiding the associated risks".

The Bank of England has been criticised by MPs for failings over the Barings collapse. Mr Quinn said the Bank had accepted that its supervision could be improved, but UK and Singapore reports into the collapse did not support the conclusion that its weaknesses in supervision contributed to the collapse.

Leeson may offset time in custody

THE German Government may insist that Nick Leeson, the trader blamed for the \$860 million collapse of Barings, be allowed to offset eight months already spent in custody against any possible sentence in Singapore where he faces 11 charges of forgery and cheating (Robert Miller writes).

Hans-Hermann Eckert, the Supreme Court Prosecutor in

Frankfurt, where Mr Leeson has been held since March, said: "You might find that when our Government makes its decision on the Leeson case that it says the time he has spent in prison here is taken into account against any sentence. People extradited back to Germany are always allowed to do that." A final decision on timings for Mr Leeson's

voluntary return to Singapore is expected by November 23.

Mr Eckert said: "When I receive the papers back from the Government, I will call Singapore to set a date. Mr Leeson will be handed over to Singapore officials by Frankfurt airport police. We do not know whether he will travel on a scheduled Singapore Airline flight or a special plane."

Key rate cut by Bank of France

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE Bank of France cut a key money market interest rate yesterday, taking advantage of a positive response to the new French cabinet's emphasis on cutting the budget deficit.

But leading economists in London still doubted whether France would qualify for the European single currency and prominent Europeans argued for even tighter rules governing budget deficits.

Speaking at a conference hosted by The Institute of Economic Affairs in London, Professor Anna Schwartz, of the National Bureau of Economic Research, said: "Monetary union will definitely not proceed if France does not qualify for acceptance into the Union and all indications are that it fails to meet the fiscal criteria."

Pascal Salin, Professor of Economics at the Université de Paris-Dauphine, said: "If things go on as they are, there is no chance that France can solve its economic problems and meet the Maastricht criteria in time."

Omar Issing, Bundesbank chief economist, said statutory safeguards were needed after monetary union to prevent undesirable fiscal policies of some member states penalising others as higher interest rates. There was no chance of enough member countries meeting the Maastricht convergence criteria to form the single currency by 1997.

Jacques Santer, European Commission President, said further agreements would have to be reached to make sure the criteria were adhered to after the single currency was established.

The Bank of France said it was reopening its five to 10-day lending window at a rate of 6.35 per cent. It had previously offered 24-hour funds at 6.60 per cent. However, the crucial question of when France can cut its more important intervention rate remains.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

US rate cut hopes as producer prices fall

THE chance of a further US interest rate cut rose yesterday after an unexpected fall in wholesale prices. The Labour Department said its producer prices index fell 0.1 per cent in October after a 0.3 per cent increase in September. This was the third drop in the PPI in five months and provided fresh evidence that inflation remains well under control.

Separate figures pointed to slower economic growth with the number of first-time applicants for state unemployment insurance rising 9,000 in the last week to 375,000, the highest level since the week ended July 15. The Federal Open Market Committee, which decided on US rates, meets next Wednesday. However, there is considerable doubt whether government will be working normally because of the current stand-off over the budget, and some economists believe that a rate cut may have to wait until the December 19 meeting.

Peso hits record low

MEXICO's peso plunged to a record low last night amid fears that the Government may be losing direction on economic policy. The currency fell 35 centavos to \$2.20 to the dollar in the first hour of trading and fluctuated around that level before moving back up to \$2.05 on profit-taking at noon. Analysts said investors were worried about the Government's apparently contradictory policy on interest rates, and its problems in setting up a peso support plan with export companies.

German remanded

A GERMAN arrested in September after a Serious Fraud Office and Devon and Cornwall police investigation into an alleged £100 million "advanced fee" fraud, was again remanded in custody, to December 4, when he appeared before Torquay magistrates yesterday. Gerhard Martens, being held with Peter Tugel, a German, and Sebastiano Saia, an Italian, was also charged on two counts of conspiracy to defraud. Signor Saia will appear in court on November 27.

Top pay views sought

THE London Stock Exchange is inviting comments on three recommendations of the Greenbury committee on executive pay. A consultative document seeks comments by December 8 on proposed amendments to listing rules relating to the definition of long-term incentive schemes; prohibiting the issuing of executive share options at a discount; and requiring that grants of options and awards under executive share option or other long-term incentive schemes be phased.

Pioneer float pulled

THE flotation of Pioneer Goldfields, owner of Teberebie, Ghana's second largest gold mine, has been pulled. The Pioneer Group of Boston, the parent company, blamed the decision to pull the London float on adverse market conditions. Mining analysts said they were not entirely surprised and thought the issue overpriced at an indicated \$9.50-\$10.50 a share, which would have capitalised the company at between \$712.50 million and \$787.50 million.

BT Half Year Results

Results for second quarter and half year to 30 September, 1995

	3 months ended 30 September (unaudited)		6 months ended 30 September (unaudited)	
	1995 £m	1994 £m	1995 £m	1994 £m
Turnover	3,549	3,469	7,048	6,851
Redundancy charges	101	97	123	151
Premium on repurchase of bonds	-	75	-	75
Profit before taxation	732	712	1,606	1,493
Profit after taxation	483	441	1,060	952
Earnings per share	7.6p	6.9p	16.8p	15.0p
Interim dividend per share			7.45p	7.05p

The interim dividend will be paid on 12 February, 1996 to shareholders on the BT register on 10 January, 1996.

Chairman's statement

"Operating profit for the half year was broadly maintained despite the introduction of further significant price reductions, a slowing growth rate in the UK economy and increasing competition. Earnings per share grew by 11.2 per cent over the comparable period last year."

The June round of price reductions maintained the value for money provided by our call charges, which are now amongst the lowest in the world. Further progress has also been made in the last year in developing new services and markets and in winning contracts with major customers. These advances position BT well for the future, although our progress is being inhibited both by the harsh regulatory regime in the UK and by the generally slow pace of liberalisation elsewhere.

The interim dividend of 7.45 pence per share represents an increase of 5.7 per cent."

Sir Iain Vallance
9 November, 1995

If you have any queries as a shareholder please call (0171) 356 4008. For daily recorded information on the BT share price and matters of interest to shareholders generally, please call 0345 010707 - you may telephone this number from anywhere in the UK for the price of a local call. Different call rates apply for non-BT customers. Further information about BT and its quarterly results may be found on the Internet at <http://www.bt.net/80/>.

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Lyonn target it can cuts in

By GRAHAM...

NORTH... says... its... more... naise... the... the... North... In the... ber... City... tax... £61... a... set up... last... Operating... utility... million... were... per... (Oliv... In the... 3L... by... The... been... 11p... up... Cran... that... but... power... Last... it was... cover... 25... says... means... growth... would... times... The... continuing... savings... per... the... Ladbroke...

Ladbroke profit warning

By ALAN...

LADBROKE, the hotel and gambling group, yesterday warned that its profits would fall as the company's share price fell yesterday after a profit warning.

The company said the... tery's continuing impact... Venus, its UK retail betting and pools subsidiary, combined with a decline in the level of credit being... lead to a substantial fall in profits from the betting and gambling division.

Ladbroke's shares fell 22p to 132p. Analysts cut their current-year profit forecast by £25 million to £120 million. The company said the... division was unaffected and... would be taking cost cutting actions to help improve the... performance.

The warning will intensify the gambling industry's battle with Chancellor Kenneth... Ladbroke has been... reduction to 5.75 per cent... in betting shops. Betting... activity at Ladbroke has fallen by 8 per cent since the lottery began.

□ Rising competition masks opportunities for BT □ Another sad day for British Gas □ Reynolds pays the price for dissent

BT gets the message

□ BRITISH TELECOM has crossed the Rubicon, and learned to swim in a free-market ocean full of sharks. Cable company investors, beware.

This is not the most obvious message from BT's half-year results, published yesterday. On the face of it, BT is starting to feel competition bite. The cable companies are signing up 50,000 BT customers a month, while an exciting RPI-X price cap is eating into its revenues. Staff are still being axed at the rate of 8,000 a year.

Yet during the course of a five-year restructuring, set to end next April, Sir Iain Vallance has succeeded in transforming Britain's one-time sluggish Post Office telecoms business into a bouncing adolescent among world-class companies.

Call charges in Britain are now among the lowest in the world, particularly if the large size of the local call area is taken into account. International call charges have become much cheaper, and usage is rising as a result. Peak-rate charging has been abandoned, and users now pay by the second, a system they can understand, rather than in obscure units.

Yet BT is still paying a hefty penalty for past inefficiencies. Popular perception has yet to recognise how little it now costs to call that auntie in Australia or

brother in Belfast. This is about to change. The over-familiar Bob Hoskyns has persuaded us that it is good to talk. The next BT campaign will point out that many of us can afford to.

It is not just lower operating costs that can be passed on to the consumer as a result of BT's massive exchange modernisation programme. The company is about to unleash a range of new cheap services for the household consumer; services which tell you a call is waiting, take a message, or re-direct callers to you will bring in extra revenue at little extra cost.

Calls have become cheap because carrying them has become a commodity business. But BT can now replace that with cash from a new and expandable revenue stream arising from its ability to engage in clever switching.

The present price controls agreement with OfTel is scheduled to end in July 1997. Some serious thought should now begin about the kind of regime needed in the future. Is it time to switch the emphasis from promoting unequal competition

to encouraging investment that will accelerate the introduction of new services that will benefit the consumer, and the economy as a whole? The quality and range of telecommunications has now become a vital ingredient of national competitiveness.

BT should no longer fear the cable companies, and Sir Iain Vallance, the chairman, says he does not. He has grasped a message that has escaped his counterpart at British Gas. "Our prime objective is to please our customers," Sir Iain said yesterday. "If that brings back customers from cable, that is a bonus." It will, and it is.

Arrogant Gas springs a leak

□ YOUNGER readers may have difficulty remembering the days before privatisation when British Gas acted as an arrogant and inefficient behemoth which treated its customers with contempt. But the management are doing their best to ensure today's new customers do not miss out on the experience.



British Gas is hanging grimly on to its position as the country's most-criticised utility over standards of service. The public apology Cedric Brown, the chief executive, made in September after complaints from customers doubled to record levels was humiliation enough.

The company has now had to exit the Charter Mark club, nose in the air but on the most flimsy of pretences, shortly before being thrown out by the bouncers, a point being well rubbed in by Roger Freeman, the Minister in charge of the club, yesterday. Mr Brown's refusal to repeat his apology to customers yesterday only adds a broad helping of arrogance to the mix.

What is so extraordinary is

just how fast, in as little as a year, and how firmly Gas has managed to wedge itself at the top of the public hate list, in spite of earlier improvements in the quality of service in the wake of privatisation. Time was when BT had the biggest share of public loathing; for reasons set out above, not any longer. The water and power companies have been pilloried for "fat cat" greed. But Gas still leads the rest of the field by a long distance.

Mr Brown has said that once the restructuring that is splitting the company into four parts is completed, standards will still be high, a statement at best irrelevant and at worst mind-numbingly complacent. Incorrect bills and rude and unhelpful staff, the main complaints, are in no way affected by a change of expensive corporate logo.

British Gas has timed its withdrawal to coincide with Royal Assent for the Gas Act, which breaks its monopoly on supply. The constituent businesses may or may not apply again for a Charter Mark when management feel they are ready. By then, they will probably need

one, to fight off the sleeker rivals bidding for the markets that a self-satisfied British Gas has come to rely on as its own.

Marking the card at GEC

□ EVEN in the most enlightened of feudal regimes, there is only one place for the noble who questions his sovereign's right to rule, and that is hanging from a gibbet. It is a measure of the liberal despotism that reigns at Stanhope Gate that it has taken quite so long to string up Richard Reynolds.

Mr Reynolds broke cover a month or so ago as purported kingmaker in the war of Lord Weinstock's succession, a sprawling and sporadic conflict that has gone on ever since it occurred to the City that his Lordship might actually be mortal. His motives were either to block the succession of Lord Weinstock's son Simon, at which he has been successful, or rather less feasibly to put himself forward, in which case he has failed and paid the price.

The question of who succeeds Lord Weinstock, the creator of GEC as it is today, will be decided by the Lords Weinstock and Prior, and few others besides. In any normal company, succession would not be resolved by quite such a close coterie; the discussions would bring in other non-executives and institutional shareholders. Not at GEC.

The favourite to succeed is said to be George Simpson at Lucas. But there must be doubt whether he has the appetite for the blood-letting that would then be needed. The task would be better suited to other candidates being touted around. The racecard includes Sir David Lees at GKN, carrying short odds; a rather less favoured Roberto Quarta from BBA; and a rank outsider in Sir Peter Levene, currently entangled at Canary Wharf.

The BSA's Darling

□ THE Labour fan club is still growing. The latest to join is the Building Societies Association, which yesterday thrilled to promises from Alistair Darling, City spokesman, to be tough on speculators who open accounts in the hope of conversion or takeover. This may be music to the ears of his audience, but for the rest of us, it confirms one suspicion: getting rich will be a slow process under New Labour.

Lyonnaise's target says it can beat cuts in bills

By GRAHAM SEARJEANT, FINANCIAL EDITOR

NORTHUMBRIAN WATER says that it could afford to cut its customers' bills by much more on its own than Lyonnaise des Eaux, its French suitor, has agreed to do with the benefit of a merger with its North East Water subsidiary.

In the six months to September 30, Northumbrian beat City forecasts by raising pre-tax profits by 33 per cent, to £61.4 million. Most of the gain came from cutting costs under a restructuring programme set up by a special provision last year.

Operating costs in the regulated utility business, at £55.9 million, were £15 million, or 27 per cent lower than implied by Ofwat's new efficiency target. In the full 12 months to March 31, it reckons it beat its target by £13 million.

The interim dividend has been raised by 17 per cent, to 11p, from earnings per share up 19 per cent, to 70.3p. David Cranston, chief executive, said that the rise was pace-setting, but "there is plenty of horsepower still there".

Last year the group said that it was prepared to cut dividend cover to 2.5 times, but now it says it can do with less. In the meantime, however, profits growth implies that earnings would cover dividends 4.3 times for the full year.

The continuing extra efficiency savings were equal to 13 per cent of utility revenue in the half year, though they may

slow in the second half. Under the Ofwat formula, Lyonnaise must offer customers savings in combined water and sewerage bills of about 5 per cent after four years.

Customers may, however, no longer be offered more than the benchmark that Lyonnaise agreed with Ofwat. Northumbrian's board is under severe pressure to offer shareholders all the remaining benefits from outperforming Ofwat targets, either to retain its independence or to maximise any bid price agreed in talks with Lyonnaise, which are likely to start next week.

Northumbrian has already discussed with Ofwat how it might share previous outperformance between customers and shareholders. Sir Fred Holliday, Northumbrian's chairman, said: "I am looking forward to announcing the details of these arrangements when the unwelcome and uncertain situation created by Lyonnaise des Eaux has been clarified."

If Lyonnaise succeeds in agreeing a takeover with Northumbrian's board, however, the potential benefits to customers and shareholders may never be revealed. Shareholder benefits might include issues of extra stock beating interest or dividends, as well as a permanent increase in the ordinary dividend rate.

Tempos, page 28

Ladbroke profit warning

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

LADBROKE, the hotel and gambling group, again blamed the National Lottery as the company's share price fell yesterday after a profit warning.

The company said the lottery's continuing impact on Vernons, its UK retail betting and pools subsidiary, combined with a decline in the levels of credit betting, would lead to a substantial fall in profits from the betting and gambling division.

Ladbroke's shares fell 22p to 132p. Analysts cut their current-year profit forecasts by £25 million to £120 million. The company said the hotel division was unaffected and it would be taking cost cutting actions to help improve the gambling division's performance.

The warning will intensify the gambling industry's battle with Chancellor Kenneth Clarke to decrease the betting levy. Ladbroke has been campaigning for a 2 per cent reduction to 5.75 per cent and wants to place fruit machines in betting shops. Betting activity at Ladbroke has fallen by 8 per cent since the lottery began.

Tempos, page 28

Rival offer for Swalec expected

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

SOUTH Wales Electricity was yesterday locked in meetings with its advisers after the statement by Welsh Water that it was considering a takeover move which would value Swalec's shares at £10.20 and the company at £1.04 billion.

But the company is not expected to make any further moves until Welsh Water launches a formal bid or until it hears from any other potential bidder. With the price signalled by Welsh Water languishing below the current price of the electricity company's shares, the market is clearly expecting a rival offer.

Swalec shares, which climbed 70p to £10.58 on Wednesday on news that Welsh Water had been considering a takeover, slipped yesterday to £10.37 but seem unlikely to fall below the £10.20 mark which would make a move by the water company attractive to Swalec shareholders. Welsh Water shares lost 15p to 709p.

With Ian Lang, the Trade and Industry Secretary, having waved through the bid by North West Water for Norweb, the regulatory consensus for multi-utilities would seem to have been assuaged.

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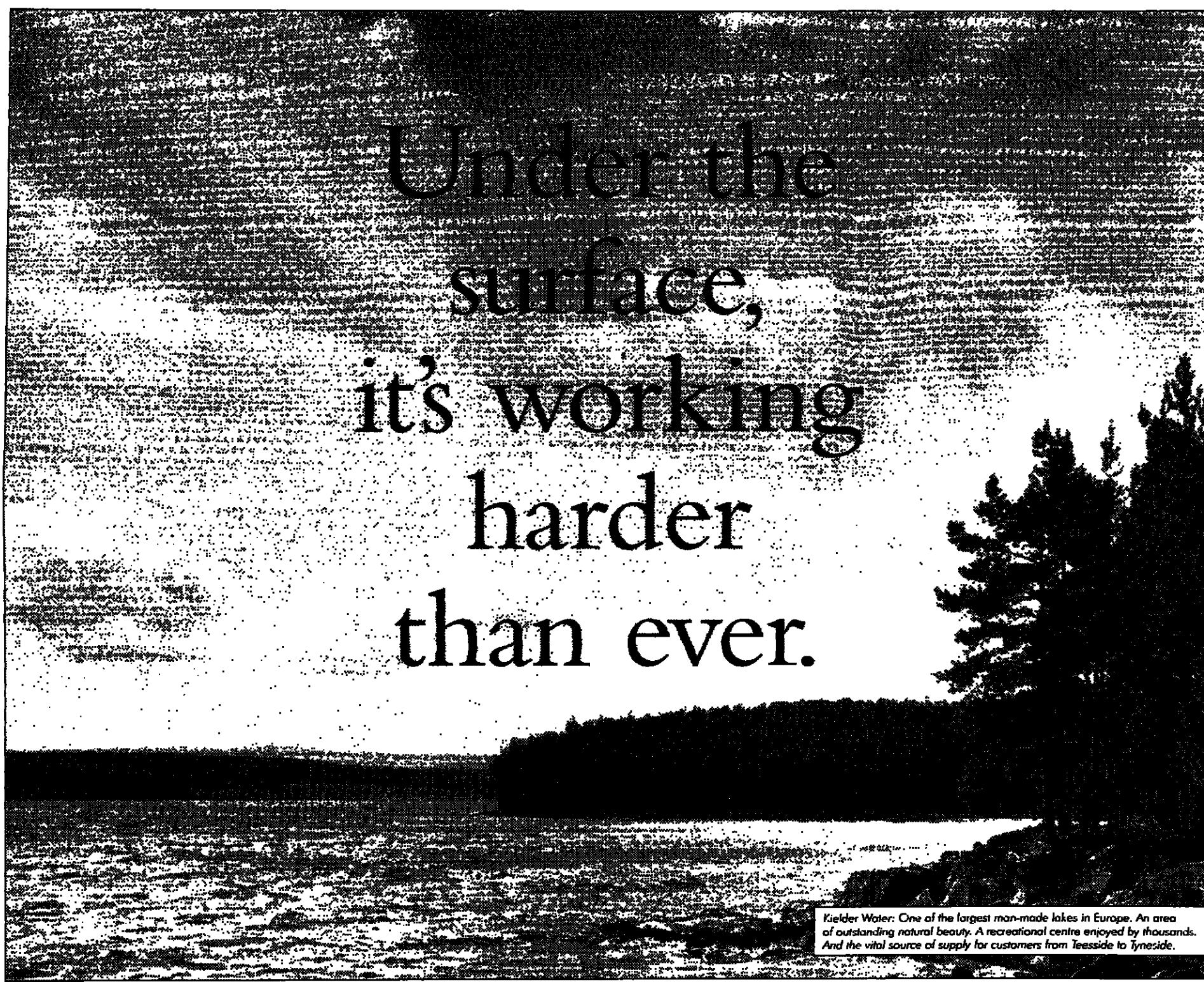
(While still providing our customers with some of the UK's highest-quality water supplies and amongst the best levels of service – in return for some of the lowest bills.)

Our Environmental Services Division continued its improving trend and recorded an operating profit of £0.8 million for the half year. NEM, our waste management business, has secured two major contracts, maintaining its rapid growth rate, making it the leading operator in the region.



NORTHUMBRIAN WATER GROUP

The Directors of Northumbrian Water Group plc accept responsibility for the contents of this advertisement and to the best of their knowledge and belief having taken all reasonable care to ensure that such is the case the information contained in this advertisement is in accordance with the facts and does not omit anything likely to affect the impact of such information. This advertisement has been approved by Lazard Brothers & Co., Limited (Lazard Brothers), a member of The Securities and Futures Authority, solely for the purposes of Section 57 of the Financial Services Act 1986. Lazard Brothers is acting for Northumbrian Water Group plc in connection with this advertisement and no one else and will not be responsible to anyone other than Northumbrian Water Group plc for providing the protection afforded to customers of Lazard Brothers nor for providing advice in connection with this advertisement.



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Turnover	£168.2m	£155.7m	+8%
Operating Profit	£65.8m	£55.5m	+19%
Profit before Tax	£61.4m	£46.1m	+33%
Earnings per Share	70.3p	59.1p	+19%
Dividend per Share	11.0p	9.4p	+17%

And we increased our interim dividend by a substantial 17% to 11.0 pence per share.

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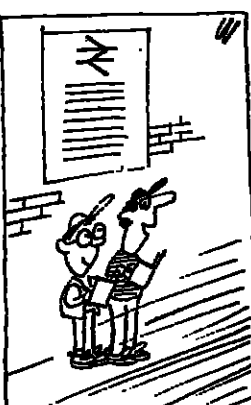
THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Trunk call pays off

ROBERT FLEMING, the investment bank, has narrowly avoided an ugly sex discrimination scandal — but only by turning the other cheek.

In promoting a new pension product for the corporate market, Fleming Investment Management placed an advert in the October edition of *Pensions World*, which was illustrated by eight females in what appear to be 1930s bathing suits. The headline was "It isn't always easy to spot the winner on Money Purchase beauty parades".

Fleming fund manager Tessa Lambourne was outraged. Not only was it sexist, but the swimmers had cut-out paper bags over their heads in Ku-Klux-Klan style, Tessa said. In November's *Pensions World*, there is a new Fleming advert — this time a line-up of 10 beefy males in skimpy swimming trunks. The headline is: "Could your Money Purchase beauty parade do with more muscle?". Tessa, honour satisfied, tells me she approves.



"I've spotted two MBOs and one Nomura"

Home comfort

IF THRUSTING office colleagues are seen taking piles of work home at night, it's not because they've deadlines to meet, but because they prefer the peace and quiet of home to the office bustle, a survey by *Radio Times* reveals. Sir John Harvey-Jones, a man who should know, adds some sound advice: "Letting office technology into your home is dangerous. It brings with it the grind of office life and is very difficult to control."

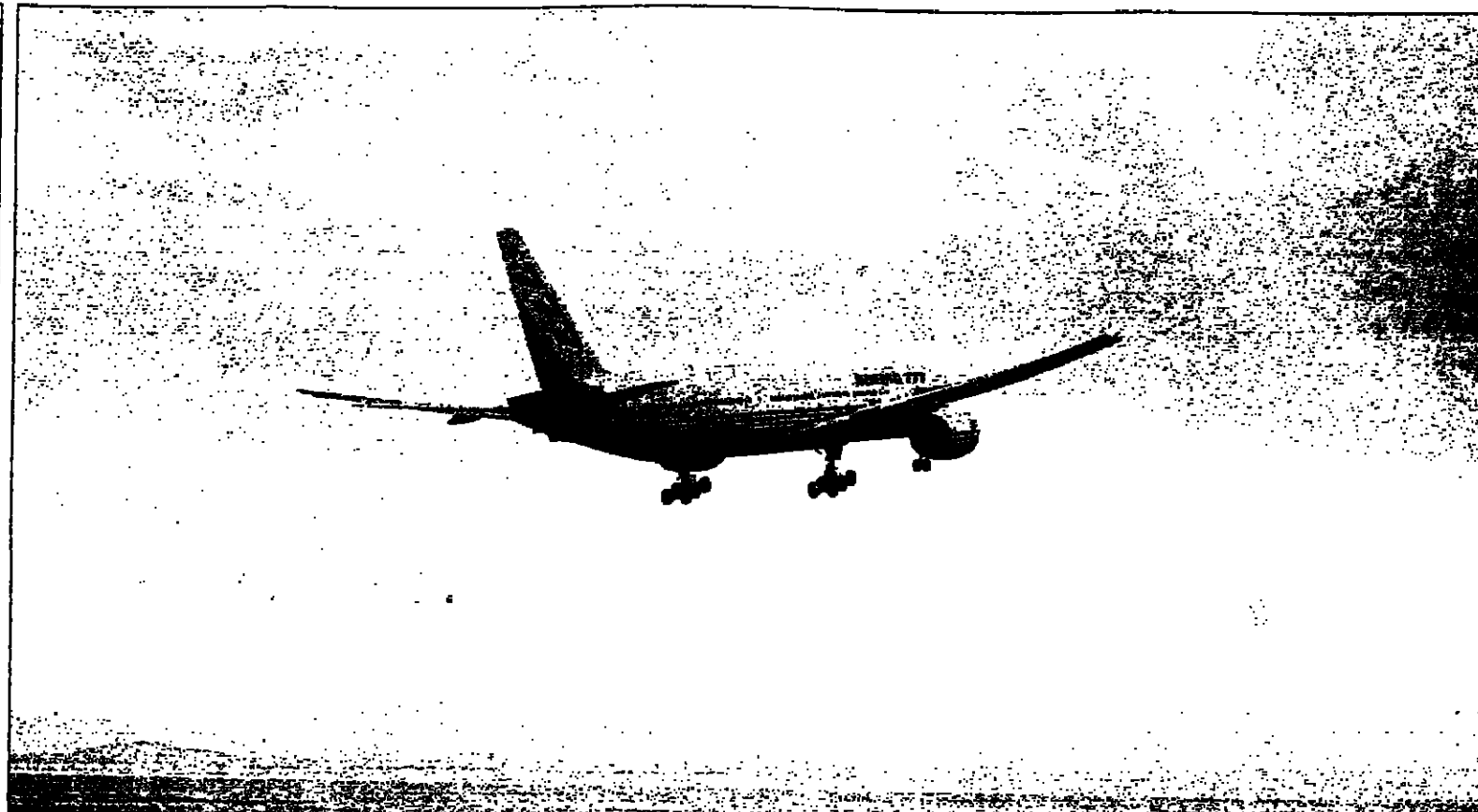
Fund run

CITY feet will be well represented at the New York marathon on Sunday. Rebecca Pepler and Lucy Haskins from UBS have been running to and from work from their respective homes for weeks and have been pounding City streets during their lunch hour. They are running for The Children's Hospice Appeal. And Max Dolding, noted leisure analyst at James Capel, is running for the Cancer Research Campaign and has already raised £32,000.

National affront

ALASTAIR DARLING, Labour's City spokesman, may be winning support in some sections of the financial community, but suspicions linger. In the past few days, the MP for Edinburgh Central has been introduced as "the acceptable face of Labour" and "one of the better Scotsmen". Insult a Scotsman's party, perhaps. His country is a different matter.

COLIN CAMPBELL



Boeing's all-new 777, selling for up to \$160 million apiece, is slugging it out with Airbus's A330 and its longer-range, four-engined sister, the A340

Planemakers braced to break the pain barrier

Fierce competition is forcing European aerospace firms to streamline operations, says Ross Tieman

Europe's aerospace industry is changing for good, and for the better. British Aerospace has already slimmed to just 45,000 employees, half its former size. In Germany, Daimler-Benz has announced a first wave of 8,000 job cuts. Now workers at Aérospatiale, in Paris and Toulouse, are taking industrial action in protest at plans to shed 3,000 of their number.

Shedding staff on this scale is a grim business, as it should be. But the willingness to adapt at least holds out the prospect that the European industry may survive. Aviation has been a global activity, by its nature, for 80 years. But massive investment by Russia, the United States and Europe in military aircraft during the Cold War gave their planemakers the skills to command the civil airways too. In a cosy, uncomplicated environment, Boeing and McDonnell Douglas of America launched themselves from America's enormous internal market to become planemakers to the West.

Their rich pickings drove the Europeans into a collaboration, Airbus Industrie. After 20 years of development, it finally succeeded in outmanoeuvring Boeing last year, winning 125 new orders to Boeing's 120.

It was a humiliating moment for Boeing. But the American colossus has responded with a vigour that has thrown Europe's industry into turmoil. In a five-year plan, Boeing set out to cut its workforce by a third, to 105,000. President Clinton, forsaking military strategy for industrial, has successfully lobbied for orders in Saudi Arabia and, some say, Japan. And the dollar has been allowed to devalue against the currencies of countries that have deployed industrial strategies to such effect in the past: Germany, France and Japan.

Some results are already visible in a comparison of

order intakes between the two chief contenders in this transatlantic battle.

So far this year, Boeing has secured orders for 253 new aircraft, more than double the 1994 tally. As of October 31, Airbus had booked 106.

But the crude figures disguise a more sophisticated shift in market strategy. In reality, Airbus competes across only 77 per cent of the Boeing product range, offering planes from 125 seats to 350. Boeing's enduring 747 maintains its monopoly in the jumbo class. In 100-seat jets, Boeing's smaller 737s vie with McDonnell's new MD95, and with the British Aerospace Avrolineers and the Fokker Jet-Liners produced by two of the four Airbus partners.

In the 1980s, the big battleground was the charter market: a struggle for supremacy between Boeing's 757 and 767 twins, and the Airbus A300 series. Today the opportunities in the aircraft market, such as they are, lie elsewhere. A nascent recovery is lifting demand for little regional jets. Airbus cruised into the top end of this market with its A320, and then scaled it down to produce the 125-seat A319.

Boeing has responded by

re-launching its hugely successful 737, with models ranging from the 100-seat 737-500 up to the 188-seat 737-800.

Of the 253 Boeings ordered in 1995, some 158 are 737s. Of these, 95 have fewer than 125 seats: a sector where the Airbus plane struggles to compete. Bob Alizart, Airbus chief spokesman, says: "The fact that the A319 was considered at all is a considerable endorsement of the plane. After all, it offers 25 per cent more capacity than some of these operators were seeking."

But greater suitability is not the whole story. The aim of Boeing's cost-cutting drive is to be selling aircraft in 1998 for the same price as in 1992. Anecdotal evidence suggests the company is offering planes at deep discounts to current production costs.

According to Mr Alizart: "It is clear that this year Boeing wants to buy market share at all costs."

The other battleground is in the new generation of wide-body aircraft. These combine long-haul range with twinjet fuel economy, enabling airlines to develop direct city-to-city routes that were pre-

viously too little-used to justify a capacious 747, or to carry large numbers of passengers over shorter distances. Boeing's all-new 777, selling for up to \$160 million apiece, is slugging it out with the A330 and its longer-range, four-engined sister, the A340. With up to \$1 billion each of development costs to write off, neither company can afford to cut prices. Instead, a slugging-match has developed about the merits of the rival aircraft.

Orders booked for the A330 and A340 by Airbus this year total 44. But Boeing, which launched the 777 later, has been catching up fast. In total, A330/A340 orders have reached 260, while Boeing claims 177 orders for the 777 in all its versions.

Part of the problem, for each contender, is that regional routes aside, the rapid growth in air travel experienced by the developed economies during the 1980s has slowed. These new planes have been launched into a market glutted with second-hand aircraft.

Only in Asia, with its huge distances and poor infrastructure, is air traffic demand, buoyant. With a market, but few indigenous aircraft, the Asians see an opportunity. The Western aerospace industry is now facing the same kind of challenge as that faced by Western carmakers over the past 20 years.

As a strategic imperative, newly industrialising nations are moving into aerospace. In the first phase, companies in Japan and Korea have become component and sub-assembly suppliers to Boeing and Airbus. More ambitious, even incautious projects in Brazil and Indonesia have led to the design and production of competent regional aircraft. These are beginning to win acceptance with Western operators.

Moving up the scale into airliners will not be achieved overnight. But as technical resources and skills develop in the East, companies such as Daimler and Aérospatiale are finding it increasingly difficult to compete on cost with Asian component suppliers. Both Airbus and Boeing are engaged in a two-pronged strategy: they are increasingly sourcing less-complex components from low-cost countries, while seeking to safeguard their intellectual leadership in aircraft design by technological innovation.

For the travelling public, this is good news. Yet the simultaneous shift to shorter product cycles, falling costs and accelerated innovation is agonising for the industry incumbents. That said, aggressive competition between Boeing and Airbus now will reduce the risk that the Europeans and Americans will be overwhelmed by Asian competition later.

Jürgen Schrempf, the chairman of Daimler, is now threatening to pull the plug on his Dutch regional jet subsidiary, Fokker, unless the Dutch Government, a minority partner, stumps up 800 million guilders (£320 million).

That sounds more like an attempt to exert leverage than a display of the courage needed to confront the competitive challenge. Britain was ahead of the game in streamlining its aerospace industry. More recently, some British aerospace companies have been held back by uncompetitive partners in continental Europe. But at last, rationalisation and consolidation is the order of the day.

Why Treasury ministerial boxes have a 4pm time limit

Victoria McKee assesses the progress towards family-friendly workplaces

There is now no shortage of the great and the good of British business who will speak out in favour of flexible, "family friendly" working policies. Many are taking part in a conference tomorrow organised by Parents at Work on tackling the long-hours culture. So why are more of their employees than ever — as a survey last month of one million white-collar workers revealed — suffering job-related stress and family breakdown attributed to pressure of work?

A survey by Austin Knight, the recruitment agency, to be released tomorrow, shows 72 per cent of its members are exhausted at the end of the day. Sir Nicholas Goodison, TSB chairman, and a supporter of the conference, said: "Burning the midnight oil in the office does not necessarily bring the best results. A sense of proportion is important. We will not get the best out of someone who has no time for family life or the pursuit of outside interests. It is better to employ people who feel fulfilled and refreshed."

But the banking industry is one in particular in which a "culture of fear" is said by employees to predominate. "I'm often at my desk until 9 o'clock," said one Midlands banker. "and I am now doing the work of the person above me who is no longer there, at no increase of salary. Everyone is wondering whether they'll be next so you don't dare complain." Another came home last week and told his family he had been asked to re-apply for his own job, which, as far as he knew, he had been doing well. "I'm told they will let me know the week before Christmas whether I've got it," he said.

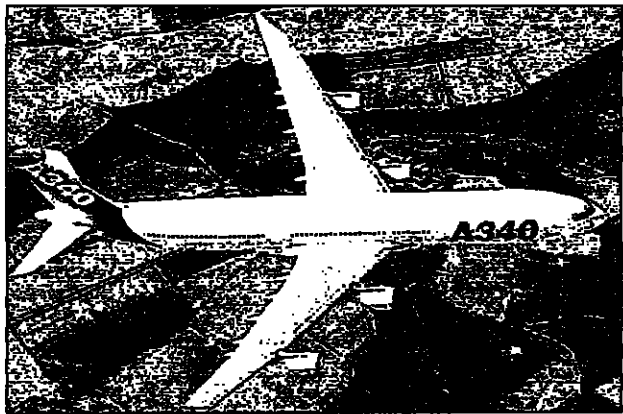
Professor Cary Cooper, an occupational psychologist and industrial stress expert, said: "What people say at the top is very different from what happens in the middle and at the bottom, and from what they do at the top." It is important to create a climate where staff feel free to ask for time off to attend a school sports day or a domestic crisis. Professor Cooper said: "It is not enough just to have enlightened policies theoretically in place. Parents at Work says only Scottish Enterprise and Treasury, practise what others only preach. Eleanor Taylor, equal opportunities director at Scottish Enterprise, like many colleagues, can work at home for much of her week. "Though we're technically a Monday to Friday, nine to five business, we have put out a New Ways of Working manual with 13 different types of working and endless permutations — homeworking, flexible hours — that can be planned with the manager and the rest of the team to work out something to suit you."

What is good for employees is usually good for business, Professor Cooper says, and should not be regarded merely as a sop to staff. As Phil Ward, group personnel executive of Northern Foods, said: "Flexibility works both ways, and can be flexed to suit the customer as well as the staff. We've found flexibility of work hours not only satisfies what the employee is seeking, and with big customers like Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury it is to our advantage to be able to be flexible with them, which makes us more responsive to their needs." The Treasury has adopted a greater policy of "staff awareness — awareness that people have got a life outside work," said Lesley McLeod, a spokeswoman. "So meetings are not to be scheduled late if at all avoidable, and four o'clock is now the cut-off time for material to arrive at private offices in order to go into ministerial boxes, and ministerial offices are directed not to suddenly demand things at six or seven at night."

But doesn't this handicap a government department in an international, 24-hour, money market? "No, it just makes forward planning more efficient. And there are some members of staff, like me, who provide a 24-hour service — but those aren't posts you are forced into, and are usually worked on a rota basis so that someone is not on call every weekend. Our flexible hours should suit everyone," she said.

Mary Baker, past president of Women in Management and a non-executive director of Barclays Bank, said: "the macho, long-hours office culture was a bar to the advancement of women. I'm happy to see it changing, and we evaluate people more by output than input."

Staff should
be free to seek
time off to
go to a school
sports day



A330 and A340 orders booked this year total 44

BUSINESS LETTERS

Bank relationships have never been at a lower ebb

From Mr Robert Wingfield
Sir, I refer to the letter from Paul Brown, Branch Network Director, TSB (Business Letters, November 2) regarding the advantages of the proposed merger between Lloyds Bank and TSB. I find it difficult to comprehend that he believes the veracity of his comments or ascribes to his customers such naivety to accept his arguments of enhanced service.

My experience of nearly 40 years in the banking industry leaves me in little doubt that

the relationship between the clearing banks, their staff and their customers has never been at a lower ebb.

My present work brings me into contact with most banks and it is obvious to all that many small bank branches have had their staff numbers so decimated through merger and rationalisation, that what staff remain have little or no discretion in making lending decisions or adequately dealing with customer queries.

I trust that Mr Brown will

further investigate his customers' needs and researches the methods of other financial organisations before adopting the blinkered approach of some of the large banks who have downgraded their branches.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT M. WINGFIELD,
Chief Executive,
Banking Consultancy Service (BCS),
Teme Spirit,
The Linney,
Ludlow,
Shropshire.

Fear of rule by Frankfurt

From Mr Alan Toop
Sir, Your report on British business's attitude to a single European currency (Business Letters, November 7) quotes Robin Geldard, president of the British Chambers of Commerce, as saying that Europe is "too important an issue to be left to politicians alone" since "the future of the United Kingdom in Europe is vital to British industry".

Equally I would suggest that the way we are governed in future is certainly too important an issue to be decided on economic considerations alone. Especially when economic arguments for or against a single currency seem so finely balanced.

What use will democratically elected politicians be, in Westminster, if all key decisions are taken in Frankfurt? Yours faithfully,
ALAN TOOP
The Sales Machine International Ltd.,
5 Dolphin Square,
Edensor Road, W4.

Letters to the
Business and Finance
section of The Times
can be sent by fax
on 0171-782 5112.

ICL DISPLAY UNITS CALL FOR INSPECTION

In the course of routine quality inspections, ICL has identified a potential problem with a small number of 15" PC screens. If these screens are not connected to an earthed mains outlet, as described in the installation instructions, this could, under extreme circumstances, lead to an exposure to electric shock.

No such incidents have been reported and the number of screens affected is very small. However, in line with its policy of maintaining stringent quality and safety standards, ICL will inspect every unit that could potentially contain this fault, free of charge.

The products in question are the following 15" screens:

Fujitsu ICL ErgoPro 151v
Fujitsu ICL ErgoPro 152v
ICL 15v

These products can normally be identified by the badge on the front of the screen housing. The product identifier also appears on a panel at the rear of the screen housing.

Anyone using a product from the above list, should phone the ICL Sorbus freephone number - 0800 454651 - as soon as possible, to arrange for a free on-site inspection.

If you have any concerns or queries, please phone the Fujitsu ICL hotline on 01344-472472.

ICL Volume Products, Lovelace Road, Bracknell, RG12 8SN, UK

BASF up 156% in first nine months

By COLIN NARBROUGH

BASF, the German chemicals group, expects "further steady progress" next year after a 156 per cent surge in its net profit in the first nine months.

The company paid £840 million for the Boots pharmaceuticals business in April. Jürgen Strube, the management board chairman, said BASF was busy absorbing the business but that Boots had demanded an extra payment of £88 million.

BASF has not accepted the Boots demand and the extra payment is the subject of negotiations. Herr Strube added that BASF has no plans for further acquisitions in pharmaceuticals at present.

Herr Strube, whose company was the last of Germany's big three chemicals groups to report its nine-month results, said he saw no sign yet of a general economic downturn, even though the growth curve had flattened out in the third quarter this year.

Group sales at BASF were 3.5 per cent higher in the third quarter. In the first nine months, they rose 8.5 per cent.

Pre-tax profits rose to DM3.10 billion in the first nine months, in spite of a halving of the third-quarter profit.

However, Herr Strube said that 1995 could not be compared with the company's record years of 1988 and 1989, when BASF achieved returns on assets of 13 and 14 per cent. This year, the company expects a return of 10 per cent plus.

Of the growth in sales this year, about 4 per cent was attributed to higher volumes, while 8 per cent arose from higher prices. Bulk chemicals and plastics were the best performers in sales terms during the first nine months, increasing turnover by a combined 33 per cent.

Although group work-force numbers fell 0.7 per cent in the first nine months, pharmaceuticals jobs increased because of the inclusion of Boots.

Dorling Kindersley slides as Microsoft plans stake sale

By PHILIP PANGALOS

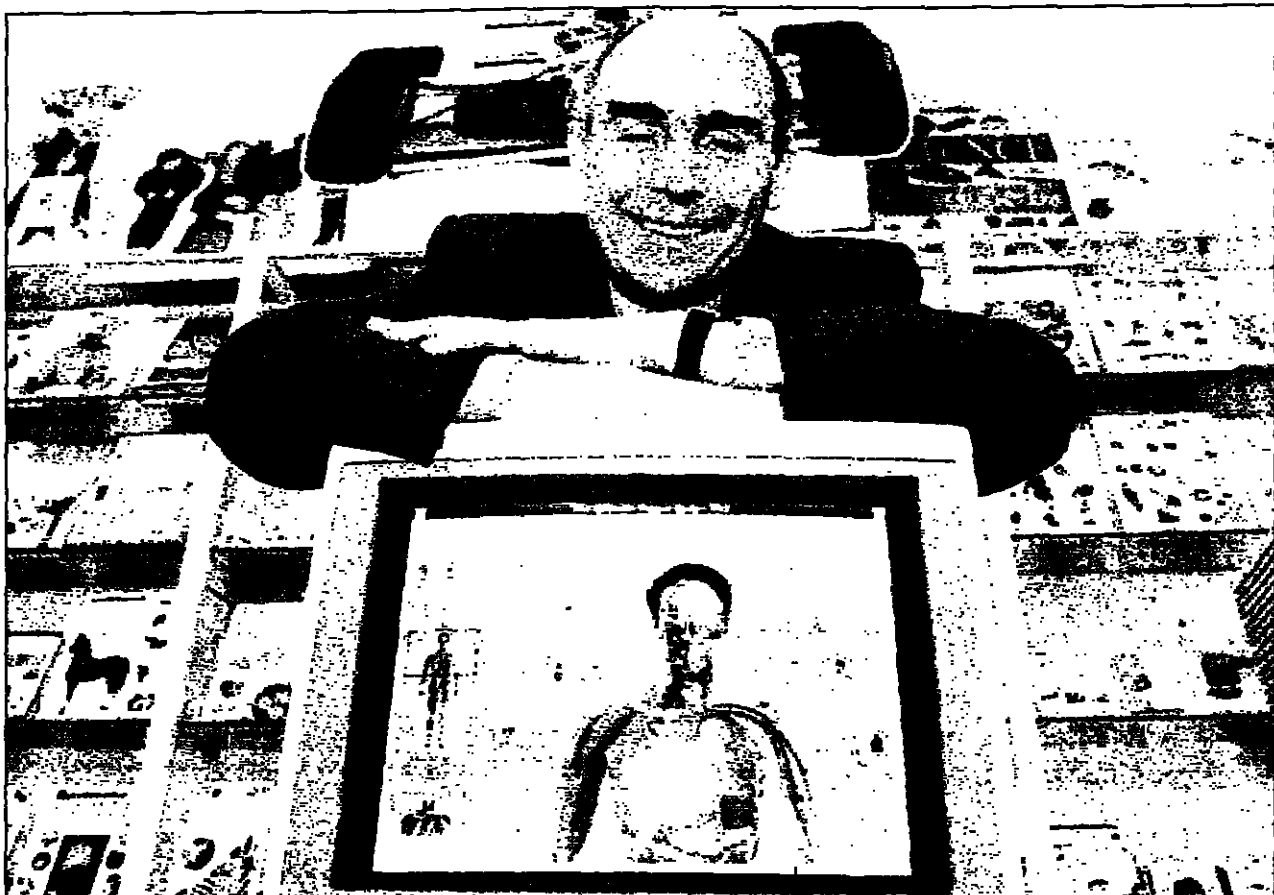
SHARES in Dorling Kindersley Holdings, the illustrated books to CD-Rom publisher, fell 26p to 510p on news that Microsoft Corporation, Bill Gates's US software company, plans to sell its 17.9 per cent stake in the company.

Microsoft intends to sell up to 12.08 million Dorling Kindersley shares, depending on demand, price and market conditions. The shares, which currently are worth £61.6 million, will be offered to institutional and private investors in Britain and continental Europe.

Goldman Sachs is lead manager and book runner for the offering, with Cazenove acting as co-lead manager. An investors road show starts on November 15, with the book expected to close by November 23. Full details of the offer price and number of shares to be sold are due to be announced the following day.

Microsoft became a 26 per cent shareholder in the publisher after investing £8 million in March 1991, when the two companies began a trading relationship. But Microsoft saw its stake diluted to 17.9 per cent after Dorling's flotation in October 1992.

The American company has seen the value of its shareholding appreciate more than three-fold since Dorling Kindersley, a pioneer among publishers taking books into the digital age, was floated at a price of 165p a share in 1992. Microsoft's original £8 million investment has increased more than seven-fold.



Peter Kindersley, Dorling Kindersley chairman, expects to retain a constructive relationship with Microsoft

The two companies have been involved in a broad multimedia licensing arrangement since 1991, which continues. At the start, the two operated in exploring the potential in the fast-growing area of multimedia publishing, with Dorling Kindersley creating the Musical Instru-

ments CD-Rom, the first electronic title on compact disc, for Microsoft, which was published in 1992. However, since then both companies have operated independently in the development of their multimedia publishing programmes, each creating its own software and content.

Peter Kindersley, chairman and chief executive, said: "Microsoft's relationship with Dorling Kindersley was, at the outset in 1991, driven more by commercial than investment considerations."

"Our relationship with Microsoft has been and will continue to be very construc-

tive but, with both companies now well established as electronic publishers in their own right, the commercial benefits are not dependent on a continued shareholding."

Trading in the three months to September 30 was in line with expectations, Mr Kindersley said.

Annoyed rebel leaves GEC board

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

RICHARD REYNOLDS, the rebel GEC director who was yesterday removed from the board of the defence and electronics company, is believed to be in talks with a number of telecoms groups about a future position.

Potential employers have been prepared for his availability since he made public his annoyance with the way in which GEC was looking for a successor to Lord Weinstock, 71, the chairman who intends to step down next summer. A friend of Mr Reynolds said: "He knew when he talked openly about the

succession process that he could pay for it with his job and he was prepared to do that. Similarly, companies where his experience could be applied have been aware that he could be leaving GEC."

Mr Reynolds was chairman of GPT, GEC's telecommunications joint venture with Siemens, the German electronics company. He left suddenly yesterday after both GEC and its telecoms subsidiary issued brief statements regarding his departure.

Ennergis, a cable carrier owned by the National Grid, is currently seeking a chief executive after David Dey left

several months ago. The company yesterday refused to comment on whether it was having talks with Mr Reynolds. A severance agreement has been struck between GEC and its former director although neither party would indicate what the deal meant for Mr Reynolds, who has more than 30 years of service with GEC. He was on a rolling two-year contract, earning £205,000 a year.

GEC refused to elaborate on its announcement to the Stock Exchange that Mr Reynolds had ceased to be a director, while GPT, where Mr Reynolds was said to have already cleared

his desk, commented merely that its chairman had resigned to "pursue other interests". Mr Reynolds's complaint about the succession process was that it was being largely master-minded by Lord Weinstock rather than the board of directors as a whole.

Rumours of a likely replacement for the chairman have abounded since Lord Weinstock announced his intended departure. The name mentioned most has been George Simpson, chief executive of Lucas Industries. GEC closed 34p up at 319½.

Pennington, page 27

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Glaxo may appeal over price ruling

GLAXO WELLCOME said it was considering an appeal after a High Court judge ruled against the pharmaceutical company over the tax treatment of the prices that company subsidiaries charge each other. The case was brought by Glaxo over what it described as "certain procedural issues", notably over how far back the Inland Revenue could delve into transfer pricing.

Yesterday's ruling, by Mr Justice Walker, would not create any tax liabilities or change the company's policy of making adequate tax provisions, Glaxo said. The ruling will, however, enable the Inland Revenue to continue reviewing transactions by Glaxo companies before June 30, 1996. "At no time have we relied on the positive outcome of this case in assessing our tax liabilities or making provisions in our accounts," Glaxo said. The shares fell to a low of 845p, down 30p, reflecting market uncertainty before Glaxo made its statement, but then recovered to 863p in heavy trading.

Warner Howard ahead

WARNER HOWARD, the distributor of commercial laundry systems, hygiene services and catering equipment, is increasing the interim dividend to 3.15p a share from 2.8p after reporting a rise in pre-tax profits to £3.57 million from £3.45 million in the half-year to August 31. Earnings were 10p (9.79p) a share. The shares rose 2p to 272p. Turnover advanced to £13 million (£11.1 million), although operating profits were little changed at £3.5 million (£3.4 million). The company said its strong balance sheet enabled it to consider opportunities for acquisitions.

Electrolux advances

ELECTROLUX, Europe's leading domestic appliance maker, pleased the stock market with a 21 per cent jump in pre-tax profit to 2.78 billion Swedish kronor (£263 million) in the first nine months, excluding the big capital gain the group made from divesting its auto safety arm last year. The Swedish company's higher profit reflected an improvement in the white goods business in Europe, which helped to offset poorer operating results in North America. Group turnover was 6 per cent higher at Kr88.8 billion, but higher material costs adversely affected operating margins across all products.

Villiers back in profit

VILLIERS GROUP, the US-based specialist engineering company, reported a return to profit after several years in the red. The group posted £3 million pre-tax for the year to July 31, 1995 against a £1.5 million loss in 1994. Turnover was up to £3.4 million (£2.7 million). The improved performance was due largely to the trading and disposal of the oil pipe valve-maker Gail Thomson. Robert Lutheford, chairman, said the group needed "to find new businesses to provide shareholders with attractive returns." Earnings per share were 2.34p (1.49p loss). Again there will be no dividend.

Goodhead promotion

GOODHEAD GROUP, the printing to free newspaper publishing company, has promoted John Cooling from corporate development director to managing director in order to reinforce the group's recent recovery. Mr Cooling, 42, has been a Goodhead director since June 1992, before which he worked as a consultant for Worldwide Television News, ITN and Microlease. John Madejski, chairman and chief executive, said: "John has worked closely with myself and Nick Newland [finance director] in helping to refocus Goodhead and returning it to profitability."

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IT PAYS TO TALK



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Compatibility is never a problem with Apple Macintosh.

Putting the right partner on the line can be one of the most important decisions you make in your business. The fact is, if you're looking for a partner who can help you grow your business, you need a partner who can help you grow your business. The fact is, if you're looking for a partner who can help you grow your business, you need a partner who can help you grow your business.

If a product is to find a place in our homes, it must first find a place in our hearts.

Such a relationship can only be achieved in one advertisement.

The Apple® Macintosh® is a classic example of a product which has won an enduring place in our affections.

For years its makers have used newspapers to conduct a love affair with the customer, steadily building up a relationship.

A witty and charming series of advertisements have, over the years, informed, captivated and stolen our hearts.

Macintosh itself can be now scarcely be thought of as an inanimate object (though it certainly isn't). It has its own character, virtues, strengths and eccentricities.

All of which are strongly in evidence in this outstanding advertisement by agency Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO.

which won a top prize in our recent National Newspaper Campaign Advertising Awards Congratulations.

Grand



Burger King desirable as

Diplo arran for Ma

AN ISRAELI... the Central... yesterday... arrange a... bid for the... because he... Robert Maxwell.

But David... neither of the... ers, Kevin and... about the huge... liabilities and... about their... he wanted... with the deal.

Dr Kinch... rector-general... Foreign Min... knew that... well's sudden... shares in his... and that...

Sony inc profit fo

FROM REUTER

SONY has... forecast for the... reflect strong... electronics and... computer-related...

The company... that sales of... products in... Europe were... said this would... than offset by... export earnings... dollar's recent... above 100 yen.

However, the... tained a foreign... loss of ¥32.48 billion... million) from... of the dollar at... rate of ¥180 yen... quarter, as the... price took a...

For the three... September 30, Sony... ¥115 billion in... ¥8.6 billion in... That compared... ¥972.78 billion in...

Schneider Miami ex

THE opening round in the battle to extradite Jürgen Schneider, the fugitive German property tycoon, from America to face charges of massive fraud in Germany, has gone to the authorities.

However, what looked like a cut-and-dried case for extradition has taken on a different complexion and a controversial ruling may take up to a year.

Details made public in Germany indicate that Herr Schneider sent DM245 million out of Germany before he fled and that it went through London, via the British Virgin Islands, to Switzerland.

Michael Lacher, the lawyer

abc
op
We are
No nonsense Agreement

GrandMet fails to stop rumour mill biting into Burger King



Burger King: desirable asset

THE rumours about Burger King refuse to die. As Grand Metropolitan restructures its operations, the stock market continues to believe that its US burger empire will not remain long within the group.

Last week GrandMet appointed Bob Lowes as chairman as well as chief executive of Burger King and promoted him to its main executive board in an apparent attempt to quell the speculation. The parent company insisted that this showed its desire to keep the hamburger chain within its operations as well as demonstrating the level of co-operation and trust between Mr Lowes and George Bull, GrandMet's chief executive.

Yet not even this has squashed the market's persistent belief that sooner rather than later Burger King will be out of GrandMet's fold. The argument is that this is a highly desirable asset, worth between \$1.5 and \$2 billion, which has few natural synergies with GrandMet's other businesses. A profitable trade sale would release a mountain of cash for the group to use on an acquisition with more relevance to its other operations.

"Burger King is solidly in the number two position in the largest food category in the US, so of course it is attractive," says Denis Lombardi, director of restaurant consulting at the Chicago based

firm of Technomic. "Who would want to buy it? Somebody not in burgers, and somebody big."

Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, the buyout specialist that is struggling to make its huge RJR Nabisco purchase pay its way, is understood to have looked at Burger King. PepsiCo, already involved in the fast food business with big chains such as Pizza Hut and Taco Bell, is another much touted potential buyer.

Mr Lowes, however, insists the idea of a sale is wide of the mark. "There is nothing in it," he says. The alternative would be to spin off Burger King. Mr Lowes merely remarks, "I know of no plans

for that." Spinoffs, he insists, are for underperforming assets but Burger King has been performing strongly. "As long as we're doing well, GrandMet loves us," he says. But it is also true that the better Burger King does, the more GrandMet can get for it. And the fast food chain has indeed gone through a kind of renaissance over the last two to three years.

"We're getting a more focused menu, doing what we do best which is to produce the best hamburger in the world," says the new chairman. Gone are the specialist salads, fish fingers, pizzas, tacos and weight-watchers meals that Burger King experi-

mented with in the late 1980s. "We've been catching up on McDonald's in the last two years," Mr Lowes says.

Its recent advertising has been a direct assault on McDonald's pre-eminence as the world's biggest hamburger chain. Its burgers have grown in size from 1.6oz to 2.8oz, making them 60 per cent bigger than McDonald's. Burger King claims. While it retains some differences from its larger rival, such as vegetarian burgers in Britain, its basic fare is essentially very similar—and sales have shot up nearly 10 per cent last year. Burger King's sales are now \$8 billion, through about 7,800 out-

lets in 57 countries. Last year it opened 650 new outlets and the pace is showing no sign of slowing down. "We aim to win the drive-through and playground battle," says Mr Lowes. With high streets in Britain and even in the US becoming saturated, the competition has moved to other locations. Drive-throughs already constitute 65 per cent of Burger King's US business and is rising steadily in the UK.

The stock market would like to see GrandMet go all the way and separate out its food and drinks side, and — of all its assets — Burger King is fast becoming one of the most attractive.

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

Diplomat 'tried to arrange rescue' for Maxwell group

BY A CORRESPONDENT

AN ISRAELI diplomat told the Central Criminal Court yesterday how he tried to arrange a £400 million rescue bid for the Maxwell group because he felt indebted to Robert Maxwell.

But David Kimche said neither of the Maxwell brothers, Kevin and Ian, told him about the huge pension fund liabilities and when he learnt about them from press reports he wanted nothing more to do with the deal.

Dr Kimche, the retired director-general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, said he knew that after Robert Maxwell's sudden death at sea, the shares in his group plunged and that his sons urgently

needed cash in a bid to prop up the ailing empire. He met them in London to try to see if he could find someone willing to invest in the group.

Dr Kimche said he thought of his friend Roger Tamraz as a possible investor because he knew he was very wealthy, a brilliant businessman and had extensive contacts with the Arab Gulf states.

He revealed publicly for the first time that Mr Tamraz had been a secret emissary from the Lebanese Government to the Israeli Government in the 1980s when the two countries were fighting. In the days after Robert Maxwell's death, Dr Kimche approached him about investing £400 million

in the group and Mr Tamraz was enthusiastic. Dr Kimche understood he would lead a syndicate of wealthy Arabs.

Cross-examined by Richard Lissack, QC, for the prosecution, Dr Kimche said he believed the reason that the rescue bid failed was because time ran out. He explained there was tremendous time pressure to complete the deal quickly but in the Arab world things took time.

Neither Kevin nor Ian had told him that there was a problem with the pension funds. When he learnt from press reports that there were problems and possible illegality, he and Mr Tamraz decided they wanted nothing more to do with the deal.

Dr Kimche said he had come to court voluntarily to give evidence because of his indebtedness to Robert Maxwell for introducing him to Russian politicians, his help over the emigration of Soviet Jews and for building bridges between the two countries.

He also said he wanted to see the sons dealt with fairly because "I felt very strongly at the time they were doing what they could to raise money to save their company".

Mr Tamraz told the court he was the president and chief executive of Oil Capital Inc, a private company dealing with "project financing".

He said he believed the injection of £400 million would have saved the Maxwell empire, and the deal was a realistic proposition which would have saved the group from falling into the hands of administrators.

Mr Tamraz said the creditors, including the pensioners, were "in a much worse position today than if the group had been floated".

Mr Tamraz said he had never met Robert Maxwell and only met his sons once.

Kevin and Ian Maxwell and Larry Trachtenberg deny conspiracy to defraud. The trial was adjourned until today.



John Reeve, left, the incoming chairman, with Roger Elliott, his predecessor

Willis Corroon jumps 38% on benefits of restructuring

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY

A YEAR of cost-cutting and restructuring, including the loss of 900 jobs worldwide, increased nine-month profits at Willis Corroon Group, the international insurance broker, by 38 per cent to £75.3 million.

Debt for the three quarters to September 30 has been reduced and profits restored to 1993 levels in an increasingly tough environment where "both commission and fees are under acute pressure".

The company said yesterday it wanted to "refocus as advisers rather than middlemen" and was planning to expand its operations in China and into Latin America.

The reorganisation plan was launched last year to correct disappointing profits, and Willis Corroon is keen to increase the range of business for which it charges fees for broking advice. However, it is continuing to receive commission for deals in the reinsurance, smaller retail and wholesale markets.

Life has been tough for insurance brokers. They face competition from direct insurance which cuts out middlemen, pressure to cut premiums and a trend towards self-insurance by larger companies.

Over the nine months, operating expenses at the group were reduced by 5 per cent, but operating revenue also fell by 1

per cent to £544 million. Willis Corroon's dilemma is that the cheaper the deal it secures for its customers, the lower the commission it receives as a percentage of the deal.

Roger Elliott, who will be replaced as group executive chairman by John Reeve, said the results showed "a steady improvement".

In the UK, the group has been trying to sell empty property at two sites, without success. Turnover of US and UK retail operations rose 2 per cent, while Willis Corroon Aerospace, which is the world leader in its sector, showed a rise of 18 per cent in turnover.

The UK contributed the greatest proportion of operating profit, up from £46.5 million to £49.3 million for the nine months. North America contributed £20.7 million, up sharply from £7.3 million in the same period in 1994. Profit from the rest of the world was £1.1 million (£300,000).

Overall, the pre-tax profits of £75.3 million comprised £71.7 million from continuing operations and £3.6 million from discontinued operations, including a £2.7 million gain, on which no tax is expected to be paid, on the sale of part of the group's holding in the Gryphon underwriting business.

The group expects to pay a fourth interim dividend of 1.65p, making 6.6p for the year.

Sony increases profit forecast

FROM REUTERS IN TOKYO

SONY has raised its profit forecast for the full year to reflect strong sales of electronics and personal computer-related equipment.

The company conceded that sales of its audiovisual products in America and Europe were stagnant, but said this would be more than offset by a boost to export earnings from the dollar's recent appreciation above 100 yen.

However, the group sustained a foreign exchange loss of ¥32.45 billion (£205 million) from forward sales of the dollar at an average rate of ¥86 yen in the second quarter, as the dollar's appreciation took it by surprise.

For the three months to September 30, Sony reported ¥1.15 trillion in sales and ¥8.61 billion in net profit.

That compared with ¥972.78 billion in sales and a

¥13.47 billion net loss in the same quarter last year. The loss was mainly because of a ¥265.2 billion yen write-off of goodwill associated with Sony's 1989 purchase of Columbia Pictures, the US film studio.

Sony raised its forecast for group net profit in the full business year to ¥65 billion from its previous prediction of ¥41 billion.

Sales of electronics in the second quarter this year leapt 23 per cent. But sales at the entertainment business, including films and music, rose only 0.3 per cent. Operating profit from electronics soared 250 per cent to ¥55.87 billion, helped by efforts to cut production costs.

Sumio Sano, managing director, said: "We have raised the outlook as the dollar is expected to stay around ¥100 in the second half."

Schneider to appeal over Miami extradition ruling

BY COLIN NARBROUGH

THE opening round in the battle to extradite Jürgen Schneider, the fugitive German property tycoon, from America to face charges of massive fraud in Germany has gone to the authorities.

However, what looked like a cut-and-dried case for extradition has taken on a different complexion and a conclusive ruling may take up to a year.

Details made public in Germany indicate that Herr Schneider sent DM245 million out of Germany before he fled and that it went through London, via the British Virgin Islands, to Switzerland.

Michael Lacher, the lawyer

representing Herr Schneider, 61, and his wife, Claudia, yesterday said that they would appeal against Wednesday's approval of their extradition given by a federal court magistrate in Miami, where the couple are being held.

The Schneider property empire failed last year, with debts of DM3.6 billion. Mr Lacher argues that Herr Schneider was the victim of "over zealous creditors" and that his creditors, primarily Deutsche Bank, orchestrated his fall.

Mr Lacher said Herr Schneider would appeal against Wednesday's ruling by the Miami magistrate.

"This battle will continue until the Schneiders are freed and fully compensated," he said. Earlier, Mr Lacher said that his client would seek at least DM6 billion in damages from creditors.

The Schneiders disappeared in April last year when the troubles at the property company surfaced, reappearing in May this year in Florida, where they were arrested. Mr Lacher says that Herr Schneider was on an extended holiday on health grounds and is not a fugitive.

The appeals process in America could mean many months of delay in extradition.

United sets USAir bid conditions

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT IN NEW YORK

GERALD GREENWALD, chairman and chief executive of United Airlines, has warned USAir that he will not go ahead with a bid for the company unless its employees agree to cost-saving concessions first.

United, America's largest airline, is the frontrunner to buy USAir, which is 24 per cent owned by British Airways. It is due to complete a feasibility study into the takeover in the next few days but Mr Greenwald insists that he would need concessions from USAir before any bid is launched. If such agreements are given there is a chance of a firm bid from United as early as next week, analysts said.

USAir has suffered from severe financial problems over the last few years and has failed to cut overheads. A takeover would offer BA an opportunity to sell its stake, which has halved in value since it invested \$500 million in USAir three years ago.

USAir's management has been unable to solve problems of poor labour relations. One of Mr Greenwald's main concerns will be that he does not inherit this situation.

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Investment jet plan at Airbus

PARTNERS in the four-nation Airbus Industrie consortium are being asked to approve a \$400 million to \$500 million investment to develop a shortened version of its A330 twinjet and a stretched version of the four-engined A340.

The new models would be targeted at airlines keen to develop "long, thin routes" between cities. The A330M10 would be a small wide-body, capable of carrying 250 passengers over 6,000 nautical miles. The A340-400 would carry 350 passengers over 7,000 nautical miles.

Pain barrier, page 29

Chadburn up

Porter Chadburn, the packaging and labelling group, saw pre-tax profits jump 31 per cent to £2.1 million for the six months to September 29 despite a reduction in turnover from £44.3 million to £37.8 million. There is again no interim dividend.

Elliott ahead

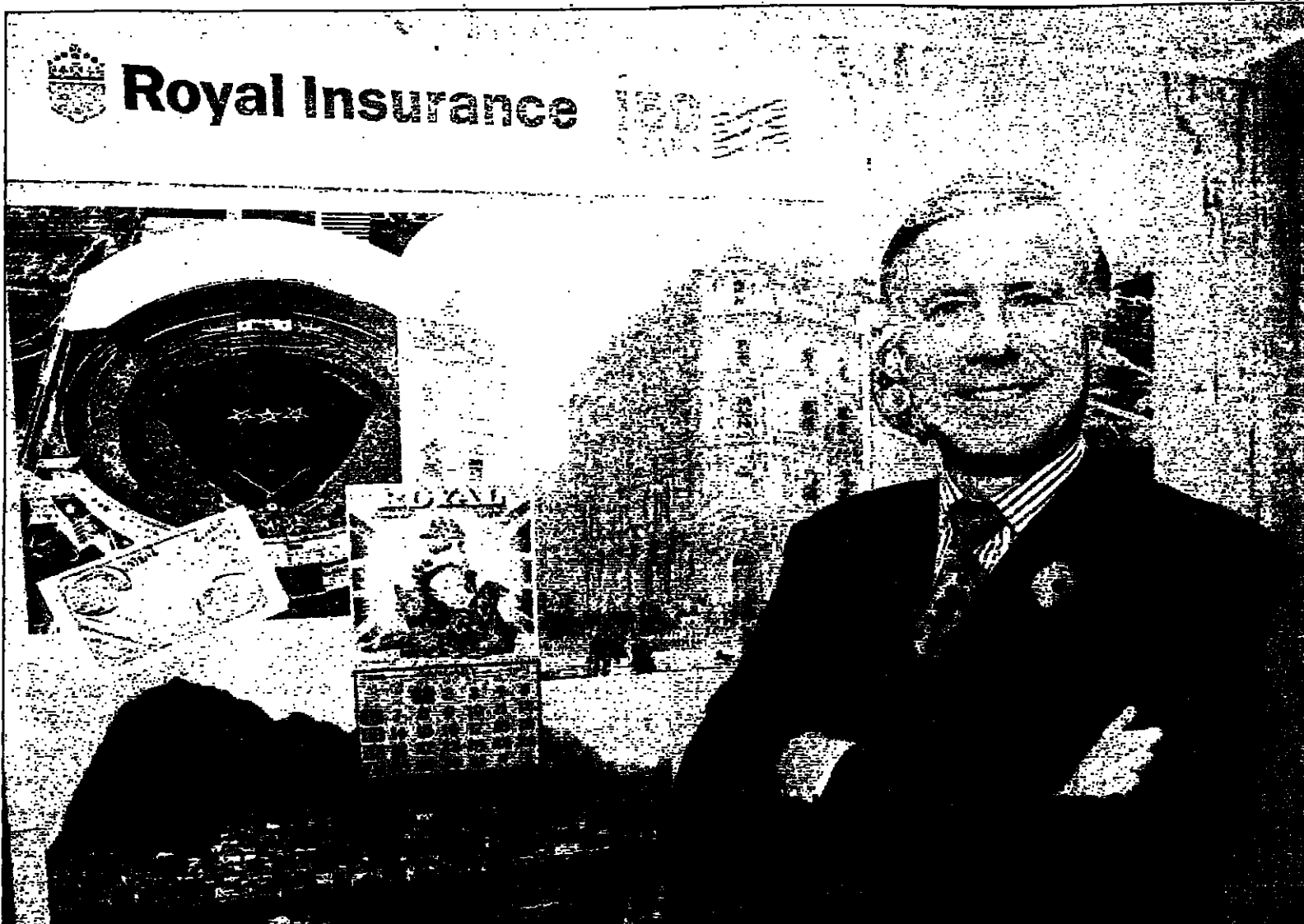
Organic growth, helped by strong exports, saw B Elliott, the electrical and mechanical engineering group, reach a 25 per cent advance in the six months to September 30. Pre-tax profits rose to £2.42 million on turnover ahead 20 per cent to £57.6 million. The interim dividend is lifted to 1.2p (1p), payable on January 16.

Bett slips

Bett Brothers, the Dundee housebuilding, inn and commercial property group, saw pre-tax profits ease to £5.6 million from £5.9 million in the year to August 31. Turnover rose 11 per cent to £34 million. There will be a final dividend of 3.65p (3.35p), making a total of 5.4p, up 0.9p on 1994.

American buy

McKechnie, the plastics and metal components group, has expanded its operations with the acquisition of Valley Todeco, a Californian aerospace fasteners and bearings business, for \$11.7 million.



Richard Gamble said the company had 'walked away' from some motor insurance deals because competition had affected premium rates

Royal Insurance weathers US and Caribbean storms

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

A WORLDWIDE spread of general business helped Royal Insurance to weather the worst Caribbean storms since 1961 and report a rise in profit for the first three quarters of this year.

In the nine months to September 30, Royal achieved an 8 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £335 million from £311 million.

This was despite hurricanes in the Caribbean and US which caused estimated total losses of £35 million, of which £27 million was in the Caribbean.

The hurricanes contributed to a rise in the underwriting loss at the nine-month stage

from £56 million to £70 million. North American divisions helped to compensate, with the US general insurance operations improving by £60 million to produce a profit of £46 million (£14 million loss), and the Canadian division increasing profits by £13 million to £37 million.

Richard Gamble, chief executive, said: "It is painful to lose 20 per cent of our underwriting profits in the Caribbean islands and we hope to recoup these losses within two years."

Overall, earnings per share fell slightly to 41.6p (42.7p) because of an increase in the tax charge. In the UK, one of

the Royal's core markets, subsidence claims and losses caused by bad weather, the flooding of the Mersey Tunnel in Liverpool and large property claims were at a higher level than last year.

This reduced profit from general insurance operations to £221 million for the period this year, compared with £273 million in 1994.

The company said it had also seen a "major surge" in subsidence in August and September. Subsidence claims totalled £28 million for the nine months compared with £12 million in 1994.

However, Mr Gamble said claims had started to fall off

again last month. Margins are also being squeezed because of competition amongst insurance companies and overcapacity in the market.

Mr Gamble said the company had "walked away" from some commercial motor insurance deals because competition had brought premium rates too low.

The continued weakness of the housing market meant the UK estate agency business lost £11 million — the same as last year.

He said the company had no plans to launch personal banking as the Prudential intends to do.

"We are an international

global insurance company and we do not want to be a domestic banker. Our focus is on developing our business worldwide." The company planned to expand in Asia, he added.

Worldwide life operations produced a profit of £48 million, an increase of £19 million over last year, with £13 million of the improvement coming from the return to profitability of the Canadian Life operation.

The Royal said that, in common with much of the UK life industry, both premium income and new business continued to be affected by lack of consumer confidence.

Banking union leadership contest nears its climax

By PATRICIA TEHAN, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE leadership race for a new general secretary of Bifu, the banking and finance union, closes today with two internal candidates fighting to take over the post of general secretary when Leif Mills retires next March.

Ed Sweeney, deputy general secretary, and John Brawley, chief negotiating officer at Midland Bank, are the two contestants. The result of the vote will be known on Monday.

Mr Sweeney joined the union in 1977 and has been deputy since 1991. The deputy is elected for a five-year term. He is campaigning over job security, performance-related pay and equal opportunities.

Mr Brawley joined in 1987 when the union took over the Phoenix Staff Union, where he was general secretary. He is arguing for Bifu to move with the times and campaigning against spending increasing amounts of money to sustain the union's bureaucracy.

Mr Mills joined Bifu in 1960 and took over as general secretary in 1972. During his time there, the union has seen its role change. A spokeswoman said the role has become

much more confrontational than it used to be and "we are campaigning a lot more on the streets, and involving customers".

She said: "Banks see staff as a cost rather than an asset, and experience does not seem to count as much as it used to."

The union has built up its legal services operation and is providing more advice to staff on redundancy terms, compensation for injury and for staff involved in bank raids. The spokeswoman added that it is also challenging banks on unfair selection of staff for redundancy.

However, Bifu's role has also been eroded as staff unions have grown stronger. It is unusual in representing over 90 per cent of staff at TSB but this bargaining power will diminish when TSB is taken over by Lloyds Bank, where it represents only 20 per cent of clerical staff compared with 50 per cent represented by the Lloyds Group Union.

As Bifu covers the banking, building society and insurance industries, the spokeswoman said, it is able "to campaign on an industry-wide front".

Staveley rises 20% helped by revamp

By ROBERT BOYD

STAVELEY INDUSTRIES, the weighing machines, electrical services and salt group, reported a 20 per cent rise in pre-tax profits, before exceptional items, to £8.5 million for the six months to September 30.

Turnover was up 5 per cent from £166.3 million to £174.2 million, reflecting the acquisition of Nelson within M&E services, which saw an 8 per cent increase in sales and turned last year's first half loss of £200,000 into a £1.2 million profit.

A 3 per cent sales growth in measurement also contributed to increased group turnover.

Reorganisation within the measurement businesses has been of particular importance to the group. Roy Hitchens, chief executive, said: "We are beginning to see the benefits of the reorganisation at Weigh-Tronix. Our Chronos Richard-son reorganisation is also on schedule, and the benefits should be seen in the next financial year."

Adjusted earnings per share jumped 1p to 5.6p and the interim dividend has been maintained at 2.3p.

Gearing was 49 per cent, compared with 41 per cent at the same time last year and 34 per cent at April 1.

Softbank to pay \$1.8bn for Ziff-Davis

FROM REUTER IN TOKYO

SOFTBANK, the Japanese computer software distributor, has agreed to pay \$1.8 billion for Ziff-Davis Publishing, one of America's biggest publishers of computer magazines. The acquisition will create the largest integrated magazine publisher and trade show organiser in the computer industry. The purchase involves Softbank

buying a 94 per cent stake in Ziff-Davis Holdings from Forstmann Little & Co, a New York financial investment firm, and 6 per cent from the Ziff family.

Ziff-Davis Publishing includes PC Magazine in its portfolio of computer magazines with estimated revenues in 1995 of about \$1 billion. Masayoshi Son, president of Softbank, said the group hopes to increase its global publishing

circulation to 50 million copies by the year 2005 from an estimated nine million at present. The group aims for 1,000 titles by 2005, compared with 130 in 1995, a figure that includes Ziff-Davis titles.

Softbank had originally intended to bid for Ziff-Davis Publishing last year, when the Ziff family put the magazines up for sale, but was pre-empted by Forstmann Little's \$1.4 billion bid.

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The free guide gives brief descriptions of each museum and gallery, including the Museum of Welsh Life (above), permanent exhibitions, the concessions available and some future programmes. More programming details and concessions will appear in a regular special events column each Saturday in the Weekend section, starting November 18.

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THEATRE 1
Jonathan Harvey's best play yet? *Rupert Street Lonely Hearts Club* is both funny and moving



THEATRE 2
... while Jeffrey Dahmer is *Unwell* is a great night out for those who giggle at serial killers

THE TIMES ARTS



MUSIC
André Previn introduces LSO audiences to a neglected but rewarding American classic



TOMORROW
Whitney's winning streak: Alan Jackson meets the "most successful female artist of all time"

THEATRE: Jonathan Harvey finds inspired lunacy among Soho's sad singles; but how hilarious can a serial killer be?

Laugh until you cry

Zoe Wanamaker may think that she is en route to the Comedy Theatre with her performance as the tiger-mother in Tennessee Williams's *Glass Menagerie*, but part of her is still at the Donmar, where she first created the role. There is a character in Jonathan Harvey's new play who manages to persuade glibly people she actually is the actress. Mark you, there are also times when she thinks she is a singing missionary called Clarine or Chlorine and a friend of Prince Charles called Sharon; so the real Wanamaker can rest easy. Her identity is being temporarily borrowed, not stolen.

In what is surely the performance of the evening, Elizabeth Berrington trails gormlessly through the role, her voice sounding like the wailing Bluebottle of the old *Goon Shows* as she complains of the talking rats that are infesting her flat, or irrelevantly asks the way from London to Kidderminster, or solemnly remarks that "things are afoot in Kilimanjaro, so it wouldn't surprise me if we were all raped in our beds". She is so barmy that you feel guilty at laughing at her; but not too guilty, for she is one of the more sympathetically observed occupants of the tacky apartment house invoked by Harvey's title.

There are two other loners resident in Rupert Street. One is Lorraine Brunning's George, a painfully jolly leftwinger who finds it embarrassingly hard to get, let

Rupert Street Lonely Hearts Club Donmar

alone keep, a lover. The other is Scott Williams's Shaun, a Liverpudlian sunk deep in self-pitying gloom because he has been left by his girlfriend. All three, you will notice, are heterosexual, or at least not homosexual.

But admirers of Harvey's *Beautiful Thing*, *Babies and Boom Bang a Bang* need not feel betrayed. As a programme note reminds us, he has made his name with plays which "focus on a gay sensibility" and emphasise that homosexuality is to be found as often in the working class as among the flannelled fools in their pulkka locker-rooms and dorms. *Rupert Street* repeats those lessons, but with a key caveat. The play suggests that there is no such thing as "a" gay sensibility. The two homosexual men who visit Shaun could not be more different.

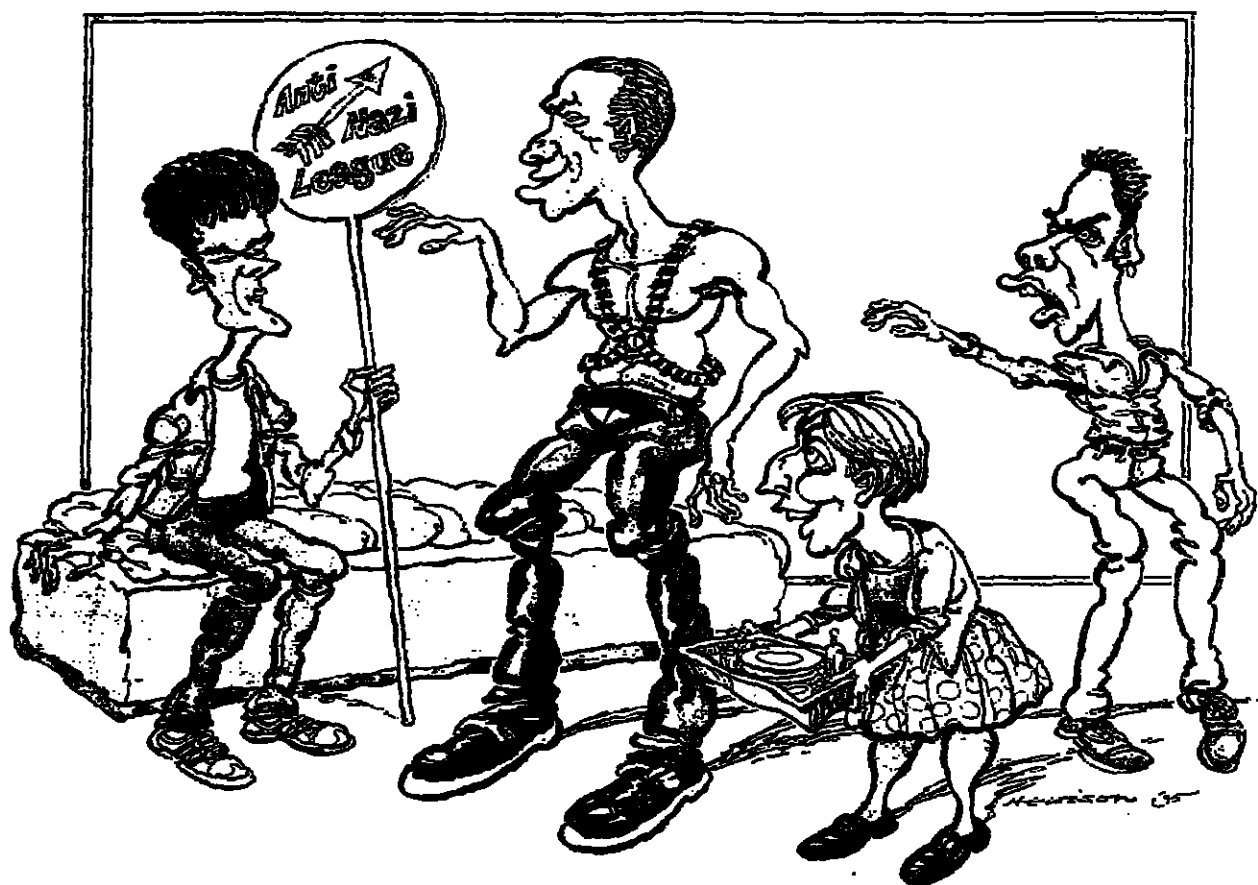
James Bowers's Dean marches onstage wearing outrageous drag, but, as he divests, makes it very clear he is not your cliché queen. Actually, he is more like the kind of pugnacious boomer-boy you find on the terraces every Saturday. He works in a hamburger chain, likes his lager, and feels about vegetarians the way skinheads

would feel about him. Whenever he suspects anyone of looking at him the wrong way, his reaction is the same: "Got a problem, mate?"

In another strong comic performance, Bowers somehow makes you believe that Dean, or Fifi as someone gruffly calls him, could fall for the other gay on show. This is Tom Higgins's Marti, who is Shaun's elder brother, the emotional centre of the play, and probably the saddest, most cut-off man Harvey has yet created. Homophobia back home in Liverpool has left him with a mistrust of sex and not a little self-hatred. That presumably explains not only his bitter, troubled relationship with the self-obsessed Shaun, but the sudden, frightening act of self-destruction that ends the play.

Harvey does not explore either brother deeply enough to justify the blood that spills across the stage; he sometimes opts for caricature, notably when he is treating the ridiculous George. Yet the play is not only impeccably acted by John Burgess's English Touring Theatre cast. It marks a genuine advance for a dramatist who has previously shown a tendency to sentimentality. It concedes there is loneliness, there is pain in both the straight and the gay worlds. It is funny, but not soft.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



"There is pain in both the straight and gay worlds": Shaun (Scott Williams), Marti (Tom Higgins), George (Lorraine Brunning) and Dean (James Bowers) in Jonathan Harvey's new play *Rupert Street Lonely Hearts Club*. Drawing by Bill Hewison

Killingly funny for lovers of violence

It all depends on whether you find you can laugh at jokes about serial killing. One of the two flatmates in this play, named Alan and acted by the co-author, Alan Francis, is obsessed with the subject. He collects trinkets commemorating the killings. And he isn't best pleased with the quality of his Dennis Nilsen soap-on-a-rope.

Does that make you laugh? Or smile? Or snigger at the merry darning of the notion? If so, then this is a play, billed as a black comedy, that will be right up your Cromwell Street.

I was repelled by every scrap of that side of it, which is the entire first act, but I am the only person I know who disliked — no, more than that, actually disapproved of — *Pulp Fiction*. I would not be surprised to learn that the giggling, sniggering laughing audience at the Hampstead Theatre watch Quentin Tarantino's films every week, and just love his wittily insouciant attitude to battery and violent death.

The plot? Well, the second flatmate, Mike, played by

Jeffrey Dahmer is Unwell Hampstead

Mike Hayley, the other co-author, does not care at all for Alan's obsession but will not throw him out. Presumably to keep the play going. And Mike has a shameful secret: his twin brother is — no, guess. Go on. Give up? Brother Derek is a serial murderer!

Since Francis also plays Alan's quantum scientist brother, we can be pretty sure that Hayley will soon be playing Derek, and, sure enough, a newsflash reveals that he has broken out of jail.

The plot actually becomes a mine-cleverer at this point because Alan dresses up as that Hungarian Countess who murdered lots of girls in order to bathe in their blood — this is for the Serial Killers Fan Club fancy-dress ball — and Derek's victims were all transvestites. Oh, the suspense when the two of them meet up! Both actors are better in this

second half. Francis looks convincingly terrified and Hayley reasonably mad. But logic and psychology go down the plug-hole in order to reach the appropriately violent end. There is also an answering machine that develops a mind of its own, like HAL in 2001, and a parrot that used to belong to Sean Connery and squawks, "Where's my toupee?"

Anthony Neilson, himself the author of two plays about serial murderers, directs and has not bothered to persuade Francis and Hayley to rewrite the sections that are repetitive, slack or unconvincing, even for black comedy. As for those jokes about rotting corpses and the rest, well, the three of them probably enjoyed a right old chuckle over them. Not 1.

JEREMY KINGSTON

● Evidently confused by the Oedipal subtext of *The Phantom of the Opera*, I yesterday named its London venue as the Prince of Wales Theatre instead, of course, as *Her Majesty's Theatre, Haymarket*. Apologies to fans and phantoms everywhere.

In Stravinsky's shadow

NOBODY, it seemed, knew quite what to expect. Not even the London Symphony Orchestra, who were apparently unsure whether or not to bill Harold Shapero's *Symphony for Classical Orchestra* as a UK premiere. As it happened, it was. Indeed, this long work by the prolific, but little known, 75-year-old Massachusetts-born composer seems to have received only three previous performances in its entire life: under the distinguished batons of Leonard Bernstein, George Szell and André Previn.

Previn it was who introduced the symphony to London on Wednesday, conducting the LSO in a performance of energy and will. Both qualities are vitally necessary in this work. Although Shapero cut his obligatory teeth on 12-tone music, and

CONCERT
LSO/Previn
Barbican

studied with Walter Piston and Ernst Krennek, it is his admiration for the first Viennese classical masters, and for the neoclassic, Stravinsky which fires his craft.

By 1947, when this symphony was written, Shapero's music had settled firmly into the "American Stravinsky school", as Aaron Copland called it: rigorous motor rhythms, sharp-edged counterpoints, and that wide-spaced, early-morning string writing, dewy with high woodwind and worthy of a true Appalachian spring. That is exactly how the

symphony starts. After the haze has cleared, scampering offbeat rhythms dance good-naturedly between wind and strings, tightened by timpani and brightened with periodic brass chords. With plenty of challenging solo and ensemble writing glinting out of its vivid textures, the first movement bubbles with ideas, tautly developed and skilfully orchestrated.

The edgy rhythms continue, speckling the slow movement's long-limbed melody with contrasting staccato patterns. By the time the lively third movement is reached, though, the ear begins to feel it has heard too much of the same thing. Its own thrumming rhythms by now lose their effect, and the music begins to flounder as if it has lost its *raison d'être*. A lot of conscientious work is involved here, for both composer and performers — but for too much of the time that is primarily what it sounds like.

Anne-Sophie Mutter's performance of the Beethoven Violin Concerto after the interval certainly made up for any expressive shortfall. Her way with the concerto is to delineate its firm bold outlines with a strength and determination which enables her to find the most supple and sweet moments of reflection at its heart. She can make one listen to a single ascending scale or a trill as for the first time. And the numbness of her opening notes in a dawningly slow central movement both revealed anew the beauty of the clarinet's solo, and gave a chilling poignancy to their last appearance before the dancing finale.

HILARY FINCH

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CHOICE 1

Simon Rattle leads the anniversary celebrations in Birmingham

VENUE: This weekend at Symphony Hall

CHOICE 2

Sara Crowe stars in Rattigan's comedy, *French Without Tears*

VENUE: Previewing at the Palace, Watford

THE TIMES ARTS

JAZZ 1

George Russell, tempestuous in intellect and music, takes his band on a British tour

JAZZ 2

... while at the Festival Hall Ornette Coleman proves that he can still bemuse with the best

Clive Davis meets the jazzman's thinking man, George Russell; plus London concert reviews

Structuralist of free-form

George Russell would rather not be described as an intellectual; he prefers to describe his compositions and his tempestuous big band jazz as the product of an "intuitive intellect". But no other term comes so readily to mind to describe a faculty member of the New England Conservatory who remains best-known in jazz circles for a theoretical work entitled *The Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organisation*.

Russell's 50-year career as a composer and teacher embodies many of the virtues — and some of the vices — of modern jazz, a form whose appeal lies in the eternal conflict between head and heart, art and entertainment, theory and sensual pleasure. Generations of jazz writers have pondered the essence of the Lydian Chromatic Concept and its influence, during the Fifties, on the modal improvisations of Miles Davis and John Coltrane.

Davis, a man of few words — and most of those profanities — had little time for philosophical niceties. But Russell recalls that the trumpeter had a habit of introducing him to acquaintances as the man "who taught me how to compose".

Russell's forbidding reputation helped to ensure that his career progressed in fits and starts well away from the limelight. British audiences had to wait until 1986 to hear him in his concert debut. That visit introduced him to a younger audience accustomed to hearing jazz improvisation blended with starker rhythms borrowed from rock and funk. At 72, and still at work on a revised version of his book, he is just as happy to discuss his enthusiasm for Steely Dan as he is to reminisce about Miles or Charlie Parker.

For his latest tour, under the aegis of the Arts Council's Contemporary Music Network, he leads the latest edition of his Living Time Orchestra,

which contains a strong British contingent led by Andy Sheppard, Guy Barker and Chris Biscoe. Born in Cincinnati, Russell initially entered music as a drummer, which perhaps explains his later preoccupation with the function of rhythm and so-called "vertical form", the assembling of interlocking figures in the manner of African percussionists. His first extended foray into arranging and tonal theory was more or less forced upon him in the mid-1940s, when he entered a sanatorium to be treated for tuberculosis.

Once discharged he went on to channel some of his ideas on bi-tonality into his composition for Dizzy Gillespie, *Cubana Be/Cubana Bop*. His ultimate goal — prompted by conversations with Miles Davis — was to find a way of liberating arrangers and soloists from the straitjacket of conventional chord changes. His solution was to propose applying an all-embracing "scale of unity", derived from ancient modes rather than the diatonic scale.

Russell first published his conclusions in 1953. A fuller version followed in 1959, the same year Davis recorded his masterpiece *Kind of Blue*, whose themes were partly inspired by the possibilities of improvisation on modes. Among today's musicians, Jan Garbarek remains a prominent advocate of Russell's book. So is the composer Toru Takemitsu, who has produced a Japanese translation.

Russell's big band is not always the ideal vehicle for such subtle theorising. Listeners invariably have to contend with long passages where the fine detail is simply lost amid the high decibels and the swirl of competing voices. What is compelling is the composer's appetite for finding new avenues for jazz. As he listens to the music of many of today's young musicians — personified, above all, by his *bête noire*, Wynton Marsalis — he



George Russell, the mould-breaker who taught Miles Davis how to compose

is disturbed by their enthusiasm for reproducing the music of previous eras. But would he then ban symphony orchestras from playing Beethoven? Russell shakes his head: "It's all a question of emphasis. Never before has the emphasis in jazz been on recreating; it's always been a forward-looking music. Our mission is to give something new. You're not doing anything by recreating museum

pieces. All you're saying is that you, yourself, don't have the imagination to create something new."

● *The Living Time Orchestra performs at the Maltings, Farnham, tonight; London International Jazz Festival, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, tomorrow; Turner Sims Hall, Southampton, Nov 17; the Forum, Bath, Nov 18; Town Hall, Birmingham, Nov 19; Lawrence Batley Theatre, Huddersfield, Nov 20*

Bad noise, good noise

JAZZ CONCERTS

band during their devil-take-the-hindmost gallops through the faster pieces, and rendered the quieter passages (particularly a misguided attempt at a Bach Prelude) virtually unlistenable. The occasional flashes of solo skills from band members were lost in the thick stew of the overall group sound.

Few bands confound the stereotyped expectations aroused by the words "free improvisation" as thoroughly as Dreamtime. Most radically, they utilise structure to a far greater extent than might be expected from musicians with their track records; they also draw freely on an extraordinary diversity of traditions, from Tibetan and

Native American chants to African and Chinese music. But, perhaps most importantly, they surprise those who expect improvised music to be sternly esoteric and inaccessible by imbuing everything they play with a highly affecting brand of fierce joy.

The band began 12 years ago as a quintet, and still plays as one — a trombonist, Nick Evans, trumpeter Jim Dvorak, alto saxophonist Gary Curson, bassist Roberto Bellatalla and drummer Jim Le Baigue — but for this Arts Council tour they have been transformed into a sextet by the addition of a regular collaborator, pianist Keith Tippett.

Their opener at the Club Orange, London (NW5), was Evans's African-flavoured *Trunk Call*, an inebriatedly perky repeated riff leading to a rambunctious bout of three-way improvisation from the

Chris Parker

LONDON

KING ARTHUR The Cuddihill School of Music and Drama adds to its talents to the Purcell Tercentenary celebrations by putting forward the Royal Conservatory in The Hague and the Dutch Contemporary Music School for a new production of the magnificent semi-opera. Baroque specialist Tom Koppelman conducts, Francisco Hegren dances and designs by Isabella Bywater. GEMD, Barbican Centre, Stk Street 0171-638 8811, Sun-Wed, 7pm

JAZZ FEAST The year's international jazz festival extravaganza bursts onto stages across London from today. Weekend highlights include a stage duo of Beanie Smith, George Russell and his band (see feature, right), the US saxophonist David Murray and his UK Passio collaboration, plus the hunky Inoué, Susana La Fina, and (late and late) Kate Westbrook. Information 0171-405 9741. Today until Nov 19

ENDGAMES Markus Stein and the London Sinfonietta play homage to two non-canonicals of the postwar era tonight. Luigi Nono dedicated his last years to radically new concepts of spatial sound using live electronics, the lyrical Robert Rouse premiered along with Morton Feldman's last major work, his *Leporello* for Samuel Beckett. Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, SE1 0171-960 4241. Tonight, 7.45pm

WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kris Anderson

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM Birthday events are in full swing this weekend as the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra celebrates its 75th anniversary. Two concerts will celebrate the City of Birmingham Symphony with specially commissioned new pieces by John Adams and Oliver Knussen, and the orchestra is holding an open day tomorrow with free events planned throughout the afternoon. An assembly will be held at the Birmingham Symphony Hall, Broad Street (0121-212 3333) tonight and tomorrow, 7.30pm-10.00pm tickets for Sat afternoon on a first come first served basis, from 11.00am

MANCHESTER Several different galleries have pulled together to host *William Shakespeare: A One Man Show*, a year's tribute to contemporary British artists from the South Bank National Touring exhibitions. More than 100 works from 25 artists will be on view, including Damien Hirst's new infamous sheep in a korma/korma/korma. The exhibition is at the Manchester Art Gallery, Cathedral, Cheshire Arts Centre, City Art, Cornerhouse, Metropolitan, Upper

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre going in London

■ House full, returns only
■ Some seats available
■ Seats at all prices

AN INSPECTOR CALLS Stephen Dillane's powerful production, with Nicholas Woodson as the all-knowing inspector, and Edward Pether and Susan Engel as the pillars of society, Gielgud, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-494 5868) Mon-Fri, 7.45pm, Sat, 8.15pm; mats Wed 2.30pm, Sat, 3pm

LA GRANDE MAGIA Richard Eyre directs Eduardo de Filippo's *La Grande Magia*, a comedy about a man who is a genius at the office, but a disaster at home. Royal National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 2222) Tonight-Wed, 7.30pm; mats Sat and Sun, 2.15pm

HENRY V The *Henry V* production, with Ian McKellen as the warrior king, is back on stage at the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, 01927 55000. Today, 2.15pm; Sat, 2.15pm; Sun, 2.15pm

HOBBSON'S CHOICE Lee Mack in the role of Harold Hobbs, the author of the *Hobbs* column, is back on stage at the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, 01927 55000. Today, 2.15pm; Sat, 2.15pm; Sun, 2.15pm

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol \Rightarrow) on release across the country

EXQUISITE TENDerness (18) A medical thriller with a twist. A doctor (Michael Fassbender) is accused of murdering a patient. Director, Carl Schröder. MGM. Release 0171-437 2561

LIVING IN OBSCURITY (15) Traits and traditions of a rising star. A young man (Tom Hanks) is accused of murdering a patient. Director, Carl Schröder. MGM. Release 0171-437 2561

PANTHER (15) A young man (Tom Hanks) is accused of murdering a patient. Director, Carl Schröder. MGM. Release 0171-437 2561

THE SOUND OF MUSIC (U) Theatrical anniversary revival of the musical. Director, Nicholas Hytner. MGM. Release 0171-437 2561

WHEN NIGHT IS FALLING (18) Canadian lesbian drama with a good heart but too much time wasted. Director, Patricia Rozema. MGM. Release 0171-437 2561

TO WING FOO THANKS FOR EVERYTHING, JULIE NEWMAR (PG) New York drag queen charms the mid-West. Joy comedy drama, with Patrick

FARINELLI (15) The life of an 18th-century castrato. Lots of opera, sex and clothes, but the film only scratches the surface of the potential. Director, Gérard Corbiau. MGM. Release 0171-437 2561

JADE (18) Nasty, meretricious thriller about the rapes caused by a madman's lust for power. Director, David Scarce. MGM. Release 0171-437 2561

POCAHONTAS (U) Strangely dull slice of American history. A backward step for Disney cartoons after *Mulan* and *The Lion King*. Director, Mike Newell. MGM. Release 0171-437 2561

TO DIE FOR (15) Delicious social satire about a television weather girl's murderous lust for power. Director, Gus Van Sant. MGM. Release 0171-437 2561

THE FRENCH KISS (12) Doozy Meg Ryan goes mad with French rogue Nicolas Cage. Director, Lawrence Kasdan. MGM. Release 0171-437 2561

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ENTERTAINMENTS

ART GALLERIES

MAIR Exhibition of paintings by ROBERT MAIR. 10-12, Newmarket, 41, Newmarket Street, London NW1 7JF. 0171-494 5868

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE 0171 300 0000. Today, 7.30pm. *The Fairy Queen*

OPERA & BALLET

ENGLISH NATIONAL 0171 300 0000. Today, 7.30pm. *The Fairy Queen*

THEATRES

ADOLPH 0171 300 0000. Today, 7.30pm. *The Fairy Queen*

ALBERT HALL

ALBERT HALL 0171 300 0000. Today, 7.30pm. *The Fairy Queen*

FIVE STAR SHOW

FIVE STAR SHOW 0171 300 0000. Today, 7.30pm. *The Fairy Queen*

ADOLPH

ADOLPH 0171 300 0000. Today, 7.30pm. *The Fairy Queen*

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POP 1
Thinking small
pays off for
the Rolling Stones
on the rootsy
rehashes of
Stripped



POP 2
... but Aztec
Camera drift in
a stylish limbo
on their tasteful
but gutless
Frestonia

THE TIMES POP ARTS



POP 3
Too much talk
and twirl, but
a fine night
in Birmingham
with soul diva
Anita Baker



POP 4
You ain't seen
nothing yet:
Caitlin Moran
predicts a
global triumph
for Radiohead

Mother knows best

WHEN she emerged in 1983, with a stunning first album *The Songstress*, Anita Baker all but defined a new performance category in soul music: the Quiet Storm. Blessed with one of the most delicious voices in popular music, the Detroit-born artist brought sophisticated jazz stylings to a series of low-key but emotional R&B ballads, and announced herself as a young torchbearer for the tradition of dramatic black vocalising established by the likes of Sarah Vaughan and Nancy Wilson.

In 1986, *Rapture* saw her talents refined sufficiently to allow mainstream success. Perhaps Baker's most consistent set to date, it is also the bestselling of her six albums. That last year's *Rhythm of Love* passed by largely unnoticed in Britain has led to a belief that she had passed her commercial peak. In fact, Baker, now 37, had

Anita Baker
NEC,
Birmingham

merely taken time out to begin a family.

Happily, she is now starting to reclaim her turf from the flashier school of soul singers who followed in her wake. This concert, her first in Britain for five years (she plays Wembley Arena tonight, Manchester Apollo tomorrow) came after a lengthy and well-received American and European tour, and served as a reminder of just why she is one of the most hypnotic, but also the most frustrating performers. Hypnotic, because her vocal talent is awesome, her technique and interpretative skills all but beyond compare; frustrating, because she spends far too much time talking and twirling through a Vegas-style production.

But oh, when she stands still and sings, that creamy yet surprisingly robust voice can bring a lyric to bitter-sweet life — a jazzy *My Funny Valentine*, her own *Angel*, the stunning *You Bring Me Joy*. And when she forgets about her showbiz script it gets better still — *Giving You the Best that I've Got* is a triumph, *Body and Soul* equally wondrous.

ALAN JACKSON

NEW ALBUMS: The Stones polish their old gems to a sparkle, says David Sinclair

Time is on both sides

THE ROLLING STONES

Stripped (Virgin 41040)
MICK JAGGER is forever railing against the notion that the Rolling Stones have become part of the rock 'n' roll heritage industry. But the hard fact is that of the 14 tracks on *Stripped*, only one, *Slipping Away*, was written after 1973.

That said, the album, which explores the rootsier side of the band's repertoire, sounds remarkably vibrant, and an acoustically orientated set fits perfectly the mood of the post-*Unplugged* 1990s.

Recorded either live or "as live" at small venues during the recent world tour, it boasts sparkling performances of classics such as *Street Fighting Man*, *Wild Horses* and *Angie*, along with neglected gems including *Shine a Light*, *I'm Free* and *Sweet Virginia*.

Like the group, the rinsed-out blonde in *The Spider and the Fly* has put on a few years (no longer "coming flirty" and looking about 30, she is now "common, shifty" and closer to 50), but the music still exerts a timeless appeal.

Wouldn't it be something if Jagger and Keith Richards could now write new songs that actually bettered some of these ancient favourites?



The Stones can still rock the joint, but they have to delve into the past for the songs on their five album, *Stripped*

AZTEC CAMERA

Frestonia (WEA 0630-11929)
ONE of pop's persistent under-achievers, Roddy Frame continues to be the victim of his own talent and tastefulness. Leading yet another completely revised line-up of Aztec Camera, the 1980s veteran brings a typically elegant batch of soul-tinged songs to the party, only to find the guests in the mood for something much less crafted.

Frame, who was 17 when Aztec Camera released their first record, is younger than Jarvis Cocker, but here he sounds like the Pulp singer's middle-aged uncle. Steeped in songwriting tradition and weighed down with earnestly romantic lyrics about the rain (*Rainy Season*), the sun (*Sun*) and riding "the wind of change" (*Imperfectly*), Frame's songs are stuck in a bygone era.

And, although immaculately performed, there is a curiously weightless quality about *Frestonia*, as if its failure to connect with any of pop's current mooring points has left it quietly drifting, lost in its own stylish limbo.

CYPRESS HILL

III (Temples of Boom) (Ruff House/Columbia 478127)
ONE of the few heavyweight rap acts from Los Angeles to achieve mainstream recognition in this country, Cypress Hill follow up their breakthrough album, *Black Sunday*, with another celebration of the urban outlaw lifestyle.

A marriage of the ganja and gangsta cultures, *Temples of Boom* combines sleepy, shuffling hip-hop rhythms with pseudo-psychopathic rhymes to produce an effect that is chilling in more senses than one. "Put your ass on the floor and don't ask why/Any last prayers before you die?" is one of the more genteel imprecations in a set that includes such forbidding titles as *Killa Hill Niggas* and *Killaformia*.

SQUEEZE

Ridiculous (A&M 540 440)
INCREDIBLE as it might seem, Squeeze are suddenly hip again. No longer written off as just another pair of

Lennon-McCartney wannabes, it seems that the songwriting nucleus of Chris Difford and Glenn Tilbrook is now to be hailed as the inspirational forerunner of Britpop.

Buoyed, no doubt, by this unlikely change in the critical climate, the group have produced their most convincing album in many years, with catchy tunes such as *Electric Trains* and *Grouch of the Day* romping merrily round the block and home for tea with snappy chorus hooks to spare.

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- 1 Different Class... Pulp (Island)
- 2 (What's the Story) Morning Glory?... Oasis (Creation)
- 3 Made in Heaven... Queen (Parlophone)
- 4 Welcome to the Neighbourhood... Meat Loaf (Virgin)
- 5 Life... Simply Red (EastWest)
- 6 Vault... Greatest Hits 1980-95 Del Leppard (Bludgeon Rittola)
- 7 Something to Remember... Madonna (Maverick)
- 8 Design of a Decade 1986-96... Janet Jackson (A&M)
- 9 Power of a Woman... Eternal (EMI)
- 10 Stanley Road... Paul Weller (Gut Discs)

But when they do establish a more serious tone, tackling the issue of domestic violence in *Great Escape*, it all gets terribly solemn: "He fell down on her like a sack of snakes/Tears fell from her face as she cried and cried."

Still, a victory on points, perhaps.

A band so big you never hear them

Everyone loves Radiohead — or at least they would if this was a just, intelligent and discerning world

I have only ever made three predictions as to which knobby-kneed rock gods of the moment will be waving to their moms in the Royal Box at Enormo-Dome gigs by the end of the year. In 1992 it was obvious that the Cranberries would soon have hordes of sunburnt thirtysomethings experiencing Emotional Moments to Dolores O'Riordan's schoolteacherly bawling. In late 1992, when Suede released their second single, I felt the world seemed hungry for corduroy hipsters and bottom-slapping antics. A year later, Suede was the first debut album to go straight to No 1 since Frankie Goes to Hollywood's in 1982. And in January 1994, before their debut single was out, I smugly posited the theory that Oasis would become larger than the kingdoms of heaven and hell combined.



CAITLIN MORAN

Two record-breaking albums and the biggest ever UK indoor gig later, I have rewarded my foresight with a big pie.

So when I say that Radiohead are the most important band in Britain at the moment; the best live band I've ever seen; that their records will sell millions of copies worldwide; and that they will be the next British band to rule America, I am confident my prescience record will be unbroken. It's a belief I'm not alone in holding: Chris Parry, boss of the Cure's record label, is convinced Radiohead will be rivalling U2's record sales "within two years". Michael Stipe of R.E.M. is "frightened by how good they are", and took Radiohead on R.E.M.'s American tour as support. Radiohead's most recent album, *The Bends*, garnered superlatives from every reviewer. *The Times*' own David Sinclair calling it "the album of the decade". Radiohead will become one of those bands of which the whole country will be proud.

The two main obstacles to worldwide domination have been brought about, ironically enough, by Radiohead's prodigious songwriting talent. They are still known mainly for

Creep, their platinum ball-and-chain debut single, penned by lead singer Thom Yorke when he was 17. A painfully honest anthem to the extreme, self-loathing, unrequited love inspires, it is *Creep* which Yorke is surely addressing on *My Iron Lung*, the first single from *The Bends*. *Creep* kept the band alive financially, but it immobilised them: a universally loved iron lung, constricting their further growth. Radiohead are still trying to live down the "shame" of their debut album, *Pablo Honey*, selling two million copies. In response to this "shame", they purposely made *The Bends* as inventive and febrile and impassioned as possible, making their sound even further leftfield, while writing melodies sweet enough for even deal milkmen to whistle.

This was their second, self-inflicted mistake since, concentrating merely on the sound, many radio stations declined to put them on their playlists — including Radio 1, which has, to the incomprehension of the entire industry, refused to playlist their current single, *Lucky*.

This would be an outrage on the strength of the single alone — a gracefully despairing lament which uses its dying breath to reach the exquisitely raked chorus, before collapsing into guitar solo and ghost-choir. But in addition the song was written especially for the Bosnian War Child charity project and, by denying the song airplay, Radio 1 has basically prevented the song from charting.

Radiohead are still seen as outsiders, too different from the Adidas-clad Britpop herd to be taken seriously. Can you imagine a new Pulp charity single being excluded from the playlist?

However, a band on such a creative high as Radiohead will win through eventually. Songs as powerful and truthful as *Lucky* and every track on *The Bends* demand to be heard; they will fight free soon, and find their way to you, wherever you are, whatever you're doing.

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EDUCATION

Discipline brings results

David Tytler on how a system of rewards can change classroom behaviour for good

Bob Burns did not need this week's report by the National Commission on Education to tell him that strong discipline breeds good results. His own school illustrates the point better than any of the commission's examples.

Bebington High School, at Wirral, where Mr Burns is the head teacher, is likely to feature in the Government's drive to improve pupils' behaviour. Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, plans to focus on particularly effective schools to show others how to deal with discipline.

The school is already briefing others on its system, imported from the United States. And, having been so successful with pupils, Bebington is now turning its attention to parents. It has just started its first course of six weekly one-hour sessions.

"We found that many parents were asking us for advice as they were having problems at home," Mr Burns says. "We realised that there were many parents who had never been given an insight into discipline. These courses allow us to put something back into the community."

When Mr Burns took over the headship three years ago, low-level disruption was seriously affecting some classes. He soon realised that hard-pressed teachers needed a consistent policy on discipline. The school opted for assertive discipline, an American scheme developed 20 years ago. Mr Burns says: "The effects have been dramatic. The pass rate for five A-C GCSEs was 11 per cent. After the first year of the scheme it rose to 23 per cent."

The underlying theme is to reward children for good behaviour, as well as punishing

them for poor behaviour. "As a profession we have not been very good at praising people," Mr Burns says. "We concentrate too much on the sanctions, largely ignoring those children who are doing what we want them to do. We now have a much more positive approach. Many children misbehave to gain attention. But if you give that attention to those who have behaved well, that influences the rowdy element and behaviour is improved."

At the heart of the system is a set of classroom rules, which in many schools are negotiated with the pupils and discussed with parents. This was not the case at Bebington. "We decided that the rules should be set by the teachers, but it turned out that this was what the children wanted, too."

The rules at Bebington are: arrive on time to lessons and enter the room quietly; remain in your seat unless asked to move; come to lessons properly equipped; listen to and follow instructions first time; raise your hand before answering or speaking; and treat others, their work and equipment with respect.

Rewards and sanctions are displayed alongside the rules so that everybody in the room knows what is expected of each pupil and the consequences of good and poor behaviour. When pupils break one of the rules, their name is written on the blackboard and ticked each time there is a further offence, which leads to detentions, from five to 30 minutes.

After four ticks, pupils are sent to a special room, where they are isolated from the rest of the school, usually until the end of the day. Parents are called into school the following day to discuss their child's behaviour. Mr Burns says:



Discipline and GCSE results at Bebington High School have improved since pupils were rewarded for good behaviour

"Everybody knows that it is up to them to make a choice about their behaviour. No time is wasted by the teacher in explaining why sanctions or rewards are imposed. This means that the lesson time is used for learning and teaching, not dealing with the disruption. One of the first effects was that teachers were under less strain, and had to prepare more work as the children were getting through so much more."

Training for teachers is provided by Behaviour Management in Bristol, a company that has the British rights to the American scheme. John Gardner says that about 1,500 teachers and 2,500 schools have taken some form of training from his company

since the programme was introduced to England five years ago. The final aim of the programme is to hand back control to the pupils, but so far only a handful of schools have achieved this. Training costs £65 per person per day.

At Bebington, a 1,010-pupil, 11-to-18 secondary modern school, pupils who behave well during a lesson are rewarded with an "R" mark in the teacher's record book. Once pupils have achieved six Rs they are given a "bronze" letter of commendation to take home. Twelve "Rs" bring a silver letter, 18 a gold, and 24 a diploma of excellence presented by the head-teacher at assembly.

Diploma winners are then able to choose a special reward, such as a non-uniform day or a trip out.

Mr Burns says: "The only problem with the diploma was that some wanted it presented privately in my office as they were so unused to the idea of being publicly praised."

The school had to decide at the beginning what the rewards should be. In America, they included trainers, money or pizza parties. "We decided that route, although last year we did give prizes of a personal stereo and a mountain bike, donated by two local companies. But we still believe that recognising their good behaviour is most important."

However, Mr Burns does

counsel caution: "There is a danger that other schools will rush into the scheme too quickly. It is time consuming, requires a great deal of commitment and needs to be carefully planned."

"It took us six months to prepare, training teachers, adapting the scheme to suit an English school. We had four working parties, on the classroom rules, the consequences of introducing the scheme, rewards and implementation, including a clear explanation to both pupils and parents, which is vital."

Where the system has not been effectively introduced, there can be a tendency for pupils to enter into competition to see who can get the most warnings.

When work comes home

Carolyn Arnott fights to keep up with her daughter's studies

So, a Labour Government would "encourage councils and schools to meet new time guidelines which would include a minimum of 90 minutes per night for secondary pupils". How about the parents — does that include them?

Let me assure David Blunkett that many hard-pressed, conscientious parents already put in a considerable amount of (unpaid) overtime, assisting our offspring to meet the targets and deadlines set by teachers. Since my 13-year-old daughter started at secondary school, my week has been dominated by homework, not housework.

First, Monday — "tech day" (craft, design and technology). We spend two hours, with a break for Coronation Street, devising a questionnaire for an imaginary small business enterprise. Armed with calculator and graph paper, we wrestle with "her" contribution to her group's effort.

Eventually we finish and she types it up. (No, near handwriting is just not acceptable.) Unfortunately her typing isn't up to scratch either — "they'll laugh at it — would you type it, please?"

On to Tuesday — science day. "Name four types of renewable energy." Shame that the answers are not in the school textbook. We get stuck at solar power, and since we don't have bookshelves stuffed with scientific data, it's off to the public library. Another evening gone.

Wednesday should be humanities — anything from Azees to Zulus. The dreaded word "project" usually crops up and this week it's along the lines of "write-all-you-know-about-the-lens". How many pages? No mention, so it becomes a contest to see who has access to the best-stocked library. Unfortunately, that repository of all knowledge is closed today so her father will have to take her there tomorrow night. (Sorry, Sir, I have my own life to catch up on then.)

So, Wednesday becomes German evening. I make sure the homework diary entry.

"Practise some conversation as preparation for your exchange visit."

"What exchange visit?" "Dunno. We should get a letter home next week." Too bad I studied Spanish at school and my scanty knowledge of German is limited to essential skiing basics such as beer and hot chocolate.

Fortunately a friend's mother is roped in to help out. Thursday is a blissful night off for me, but on my return home I find my offspring still frantically scribbling. I tell her it's 10.30pm and time to stop. The inevitable battle ensues, with cries of "You've done enough" and "You don't care about my future." Ouch!

Friday night — and, inevitably, a large chunk of Saturday — is taken up with an English language "assignment". It sounds almost the same as a project, but with more scope for panic as it is likely to be on something vague such as "impressions of beauty". So, while Dad mutters menacingly in the background, my daughter chews through another pencil and moans "I don't know what to write".

Two hours and several pencils later, "we" have cobbled together two sides of A4 paper, before I take refuge in the bath. Another week of joint homework has passed. And what of the results of all this labour? "Mr Cooper said why didn't I do my English on a word processor instead of just a typewriter?" Well, pardon me for mentioning it, but surely it's the content that matters?

I trust that, if I submit a report on my homework to the National Association of Head Teachers, they might think twice before complaining about parents "abdicate responsibility" — as they so quaintly put it recently. In return, perhaps they could bear in mind that many of us have to struggle with unemployment or full-time employment, or even being a single-parent family.

As my daughter succinctly puts it, "get a life". Set realistic goals and limits — German evening. I make sure the homework diary entry.

The GCSE pass rate has doubled in a year

Charity ends in a Vale of tears

Headmaster Andrew Collier reports on the enforced closure of his school



In Japan, the growing problems of truancy and bullying are being linked to formal teaching methods

How many children should be in a class?

Throughout the last year's controversy over class sizes, ministers have insisted that there is no evidence to indicate that large classes mean lower standards of education. This morning the Office for Standards in Education will provide support for that view.

Ofsted's analysis of last year's inspection reports is expected to show that pupils studying in large classes often do better than pupils in smaller ones. Proof is to be found in the high-achieving countries of East Asia, where classes often contain 40 or more pupils.

Schools in South Korea and Japan have some of the biggest classes in the world, yet still outperform their Western counterparts in educational attainment. But is the evidence really so clear cut?

In the US, for example, a study of 7,000 pupils in 79 schools has shown that younger children in smaller classes will outperform those in larger ones. The research, conducted in Tennessee, showed that pupils between the ages of five and eight in classes of between 13 and 17 pupils made better progress in reading and mathematics than children in classes of up to 25 pupils.

Denmark, France, Germany and many other European states have also seen educational benefits in small classes, imposing maximum class sizes of between 25 and 30 pupils. Regulations in The Nether-

John Greenlees on why small classes are thought to be better, even in East Asia

lands and Portugal even stipulate the minimum amount of space which schools must provide for each pupil. Yet in the United Kingdom, where financial pressures are forcing education authorities to look at ways of increasing the efficiency of their schools, the trend is towards bigger classes. In England, where there is no legal limit on the number in a class, parents' groups have been voicing their concerns about the growing size of teaching groups.

Around a million primary-school pupils in England are being taught in classes of more than 30 pupils. More than 10,000 of these pupils are in classes of 40 or more.

In Scotland, where the maximum class size is 33, there is also concern that financial constraints are forcing schools to organise pupils in bigger classes. Scottish teachers confronted by new courses claim that class sizes of 30 or more are too big to manage, especially in schools with learning and behavioural problems.

British parents also appear convinced that smaller classes mean more effective learning. A preference for smaller classes, and more class-

room help, is a reason why a growing number of parents are taking their children out of state schools and enrolling them in the independent sector.

The real irony, however, is that doubts are beginning to emerge in the very countries that have succeeded with large classes. Teachers in South Korea, Japan and Eastern Europe can only tolerate large classes by clinging to teaching methods increasingly seen as outdated.

In Japan, the country most often cited in the argument for larger class sizes, teachers expect all pupils to learn at the same pace and endure the same teacher-dominated lessons. There is little or no time for teachers to provide additional help for slower learners or to organise more adventurous, activity-based lessons.

The growing problems of truancy and bullying in Japanese schools is now being linked to the country's formal teaching methods and the lack of opportunities for helping pupils with learning difficulties.

In South Korea the demand for high-quality engineers, scientists and managers is encouraging a move away from formal teaching methods, including excessive drilling and learning by rote, and the adoption of more pupil-centred methods. The new teaching methods, which seek to develop pupils' analytical and critical thinking skills, will be accompanied by a move to smaller classes.

Faith, hope and charity. Our school, The Vale, near Aylesbury, lived on the first two throughout the last year and was killed by the third in August. Our charitable status closed us.

When I arrived a year ago, the school was in trouble. Numbers were down, debts were overwhelming, and morale was shaky. But we had splendid facilities and a high reputation earned over 45 years. Before his retirement, the founding head had turned us into a charitable trust.

We tried to restore morale, confidence and numbers but continuing losses and further redundancies seemed to undo all progress. The business plan, which was finalised in March, was null by April, and closure loomed.

I became, briefly, a broker and in June I presented the governors with a choice of three prospective buyers for the school.

Asquith Court Schools was chosen and we persuaded more than 90 per cent of parents to stay with us. The next six weeks of planning were rewarding. Asquith's commitment was beyond question and, with expert backing and capital, I was in sight of the improvements needed.

In August, however, I went on holiday, and within a fortnight the school was closed. My governor-trustees learnt that the Charity Commission, which had known the facts since June, would not support the deal we had provisionally agreed. The commissioners did not want to grant a "certificate of disposition" (a document approving the sale of our charity's assets).

So what went wrong? Under the 1993 Charities Act the trustees could sell their assets — the school — without a certificate of disposition, provided they could satisfy Section 36 of the Act. This ensures that "the trustees... are satisfied... that the terms... are the best that can be reasonably obtained". The problem arose in establishing that the Asquith offer fell into this category.

An estimated value had been crucial to all our discussions with the bank, and there was always the feeling that any sale would be lucky to achieve the valuation figure. A

new survey was prepared, varying the figure slightly upwards but, more importantly, expressing a professional confidence that such a price could be obtained.

The figures could not be tested without putting the property on to the market, which would involve closing the school. Asquith's offer was nominal but included taking on the school's debts and obligations. The total amounted, apparently, to at least £100,000 less than the valuation figure, but Asquith's investment (and running losses) would have exceeded any such figure by Christmas.

All this, however, was not acceptable to the Charity Commission. Had the governors ignored the Commission's view, they might have been found liable for the difference between purchase price and value.

Neither figure was clear, the valuation was untestable and the purchase price was confused by the Commission's interpretation "that any investment Asquith made was for the enhancement of their business". Asquith wanted a profit, but they would seek it from educational excellence. Instead, the trust has been forced to close the school and put the property up for sale.

I have mixed feelings about the price I want the school to fetch at next week's sale. It needs to fetch enough to pay the debts, but if it doesn't fetch much more we will have been closed under false pretences — there will have been no significant gap between purchase price and value.

The alternative is worse. If the Trust receives the valuation price the trustees will find themselves deciding how to dispose of perhaps £50,000 for the furtherance of education. Local bursaries? Support for other schools? That money was raised for our school. Had Asquith paid more it would have had the same effect — diverting funds needed for the improvement of the school into a charity no longer in charge of running it.

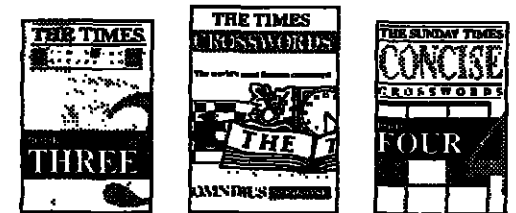
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Lloyd's exception to public policy rule

Barrow v Bankside Members Agency Ltd and Another
Before Lord Justice Bingham, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Saville
[Judgment November 7]

The rule of public policy in *Henderson v Henderson* (1843) 3 Hare 100, that, save in special circumstances, parties should bring their whole case before the court at the first opportunity, is a rule of procedure, not of substance. It is not a rule of public policy, and it is not a rule of public policy that a claimant should not bring a claim against the same defendant in relation to a new issue.

The Court of Appeal so held in dismissing an appeal by the defendants, Bankside Members Agency Ltd, from Mr Justice Phillips' judgment in *Barrow v Bankside Members Agency Ltd* (1994) 1 All ER 829, which had refused their application to strike out the claim of the plaintiff, Mr Gerald Barrow, as an abuse of the process of the court.

The plaintiff, as a member of the Gooda Walker action group, was one of the 3,000 names in their action brought against their respective members' agents and managing agents claiming damages for negligent underwriting on behalf of certain Gooda Walker syndicates. On October 4, 1994 Mr Justice Phillips gave judgment for the plaintiff.

On October 19, 1994 the plaintiff began the present proceedings against his members' agent, one of the defendants in the Gooda Walker action, claiming damages in respect of a different breach of duty, namely in advising him to join two Gooda Walker syndicates, the subject of the Gooda Walker action.

By the new action the plaintiff might recover losses held by Mr Justice Phillips not to be recoverable as flowing from the breach of duty relied on in the Gooda Walker action.

Mr Peregrine Simon, QC and Mr Simon Bryan for the defendants; Mr Anthony Mann, QC and Mr David Lord for the plaintiff.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS said that the rule in *Henderson v Henderson* required the parties, when a matter became the subject of litigation to bring their whole case before the court so that all aspects of it might be finally decided once and for all.

In the absence of special circumstances the parties could not return to the court to advance arguments, claims or defences which they could have put forward on the first occasion.

The rule was not based on the doctrine of *res judicata* in a narrow sense nor on any strict doctrine of issue estoppel or cause of action estoppel.

It was a rule of public policy based on the desirability, in the general interest as well as in the parties' interests, that litigation should not drag on for ever and that a defendant should not be oppressed by successive suits when one would do. That was the basis on which the rule was directed.

Referring to the Lloyd's litigation, his Lordship said that theoretically it would have been possible for each claimant individually to have issued proceedings against each defendant liable to him. The cost to individual claimants would have been prohibitive, the burden on the lawyers involved enormous and the courts would have lacked the capacity to try such actions within any meaningful timescale.

The litigation had not been handled thus for sound reasons of economy and convenience. There had been two departures from conventional practice.

1 Groups of claimants had formed themselves into action groups, accepting certain rules, and contributing to the high cost of litigating issues common to them all. Thus the action groups were single-issue or common issue groups, the Gooda Walker action group being one such example.

2 The Commercial Court had sought to manage the various actions on the basis of the generic classes into which they fell, for example, long tail cases and portfolio selection cases, although it had been appreciated that such classes were not mutually exclusive.

In giving directions for the preparation and trial of cases the object of the court had been to exploit its trial capacity in the most productive possible way.

It thus identified issues common to numerous claims, ordering early trial in the expectation that the decision would prove determinative of many cases, whether by promoting settlement or leading to abandonment of claims.

The rule in *Henderson v Henderson* was salutary and its application was to be circumscribed by unnecessarily restrictive rules. It was important to focus on the purpose of the rule.

His Lordship referred to *Brisbane City Council v Attorney-General for Queensland* (1991) 173 ALR 513, where the High Court of Australia, in a case involving a claim for damages for breach of contract, held that the plaintiff's claim was not barred by the doctrine of *res judicata*, which was only to be applied when the facts amounted to an abuse.

It therefore seemed right to begin by asking whether the

procedure adopted by the plaintiff was an abuse of the process of the court. His Lordship did not think that it was.

Since the second claim, that relating to portfolio selection, would not have been decided before now anyway, the plaintiff was not causing there to be two trials where one would have done all. Thus the action groups were an unnecessary series of trials.

The defendant was no worse off as matters now stood than if the plaintiff had made and pleaded the new claim at the outset.

The case did not fall within the mischief at which *Henderson v Henderson* was directed.

If that conclusion was wrong, the question for consideration was whether the plaintiff could plead special circumstances excusing him from compliance with the duty to bring forward his whole case at the outset.

An exception based on such circumstances was recognised in *Henderson v Henderson* and in *Yat Tung Investment Co Ltd v Dao Hong Bank Ltd* (1995) AC 581, 590.

It was plain from both cases that negligence, inadvertence and accident would not excuse non-compliance with the rule, but it was plainly unfair to attempt to define what might amount to a special circumstance.

The same considerations which led his Lordship to conclude that the rule did not apply also, if that conclusion were wrong, amounted to special circumstances in the setting of the Lloyd's litigation.

If the defendant could point to any prejudice it had suffered as a result of the plaintiff's course of conduct which it would not have suffered anyway, his Lordship's view would probably have been different. But it could point to none.

His Lordship would dismiss the appeal.

Lord Justice Peter Gibson agreed with both judgments.

LORD JUSTICE SAVILLE, agreeing, said that the rule in *Henderson v Henderson* was in two parts: the first relating to those points which were actually decided by the court; the second, with which the present appeal was concerned, to those points which might have been brought forward at the time but were not.

In his Lordship's judgment, the circumstances were such that it could not fairly be said that the plaintiff now raised could and therefore should have been litigated in the earlier proceedings.

There was no doubt at all that, had an attempt been made to bring into and deal as a part of the Gooda Walker action what truly belonged to the portfolio selection category, that attempt would have failed, for apart from anything else the court would have directed that any such claims should stand over until those relating to negligent underwriting had been determined.

His Lordship rejected Mr Simon's argument that the plaintiff should at that stage have raised his portfolio selection claim. His Lordship was more than doubtful whether as a member of the action group he could have done so. Incorporation of such claims would have vastly increased the time and money needed to be ready for trial.

In any event none of the courses which Mr Simon suggested the plaintiff should have been taken would have resulted in the matter being dealt with by the court before or at the same time as the question of negligent underwriting. Solicitors: Elborne Mitchell; Travers Smith Braithwaite.

Defence inconsistent with plea for stay of action

Ngecho and Others v Thor Chemicals Holdings Ltd and Others
Before Lord Justice Neill, Lord Justice Evans and Lord Justice Evans
[Judgment October 9]

Where a defendant was given leave to appeal against a judge's refusal to stay an action in England in favour of litigation in a foreign jurisdiction, the service thereafter of a defence to the action was inconsistent with the defendant's objection to the English court's continued jurisdiction over the merits of the case, and the Court of Appeal was entitled, on the plaintiff's application, to strike out the defendant's notice of appeal against the refusal of a stay.

The Court of Appeal so held in granting an application by the plaintiffs, Buswive Ngecho, suing as administratrix of the estate of Engelbert Ngecho, Albert Dlamini and Makhadzi Anastasia Cole, to strike out the notice of appeal of the defendants, Thor Chemicals (UK) Ltd and John Desmond Cowley.

The plaintiffs were citizens of South Africa and employed there by a subsidiary of the first defendant, who was a British company engaged in the business of manufacturing and processing of mercury compounds. The plaintiffs alleged that they were exposed to hazardous quantities of mercury vapour or mercury compounds in the course of their employment.

They recovered compensation from their employers in South Africa under a statute which prevented them from suing their employers for damages there. However, South African law allowed them to sue any third parties who might be liable to them for their injuries. Since all three defendants were domiciled in England the plaintiffs decided to sue them in the English courts.

The defendants applied for a stay of the proceedings in favour of litigation in South Africa. Mr James Stewart, QC, sitting as a deputy judge of the Queen's Bench Division on April 11, 1995 refused a stay and gave the defendants leave to appeal. He also ordered a 28-day stay of the action which would expire on May 9 to enable them to make an application to the Court of Appeal for a general stay pending an appeal.

On May 9, following the expiry of the 28-day period, the defendants' solicitors served a defence. Thereafter they followed other steps in the proceedings.

On June 11, the judge's order was formally sealed and on June 21 the plaintiffs received the defendants' notice of appeal. The plaintiffs made an application for the notice of appeal to be struck out on the basis that it was too late for the appeal to proceed.

Mr Graham Read for the plaintiff; Mr Simon Hawkesworth, QC and Mr Francis Treasure for the defendants.

LORD JUSTICE EVANS said that the arguments had ranged quite widely over the relevant issues and his Lordship would merely express his conclusions in the following terms.

First, it seemed clear that the service of a defence was inconsistent with objecting to the court continuing to have jurisdiction over the merits. That was the issue which arose on a stay application.

Different considerations arose if a defence was served with the express reservation that it was without prejudice to some other procedural step that was either being taken or contemplated. But the unsolicited service of a defence seemed to be almost a paradigm example of conduct which indicated a willingness that the court should consider the merits of the case.

So far as the position at first instance was concerned, if it was relevant, his Lordship would accept Mr Hawkesworth's submission that a distinction should be drawn between the jurisdiction and the stay cases, but only to a limited extent.

There was a clear conceptual difference between a defendant who said: "The court has no jurisdiction over me," and took the appropriate proceedings to have the action set aside and a defendant who said: "I agree that the court has jurisdiction over me, but I submit that it should not be exercised in the circumstances of this case."

But having said that, when the relevant issue was whether the defendant had, by his conduct, indicated unequivocally that he accepted the jurisdiction of the courts to try the merits then it seemed to his Lordship that, broadly speaking, the same issues arose in whatever context the decision had to be reached.

The remaining question was whether the same rules and principles applied in the circumstances of the present case when it was an appeal rather than an original application which was sought to be made. That, apparently, was a novel question.

In his Lordship's judgment, there was no reason why the same stay principle should not apply. The fact that the defendants had sought and obtained leave to appeal took the matter no further, in his Lordship's judgment, than any case where the defendants' solicitors indicated that they either had instructions or might have instructions to challenge the court's jurisdiction.

What followed would either be an application or the serving of a defence. If a defence was served and was unqualified then that was the clearest indication that the

appeal would not be pursued. There was nothing in the Rules of the Supreme Court either in relation to the application made at first instance or in relation to an appeal to indicate whether the proceedings should or should not be stayed.

There was, however, a passage in *The Supreme Court Practice* 1995, under the rubric 12/7-8/3, indicating that once an application was made the plaintiffs should not seek to enter judgment in default of defence, even though there had been no express extension of the time for defence.

That suggested, as was apparently the case, that there was no automatic stay of the proceedings in a case where such an application was made. By parity of reasoning, in relation to an appeal, the rules were neutral. There was no automatic stay.

But that did not, in his Lordship's judgment, permit the defendants to say that therefore they were obliged to proceed with the case, nor did it entitle them to say that there was any real threat that the plaintiffs would seek to enter judgment if no defence was served.

It seemed to his Lordship that the same principle of inconsistency applied on an appeal as it did at first instance.

Finally, Mr Hawkesworth submitted that the jurisdiction of the Court of Appeal was limited to abuse of process cases. He referred to the judgment of the House of Lords in *Rosbrook v Murgovin* (1994) 2 AC 224 where it was said that in striking out cases any waiver or estoppel proved against the party making the application should not count as an automatic bar but should only be regarded as a factor affecting the court's exercise of its jurisdiction.

It seemed to his Lordship that it was sufficient for present purposes to say that the case raised a straightforward issue of inconsistency. It was not a question of discretion at all.

The passage in *The Supreme Court Practice* 1995 already referred to in relation to first instance applications distinguished between a submission to the jurisdiction or a waiver of irregularity.

His Lordship would be content to leave that distinction unaltered, but he held that in the present case there was such an inconsistency between serving a defence and taking other steps on the one hand and pursuing the appeal on the other hand as to give rise to the question whether the latter was barred by a submission to the jurisdiction.

In his Lordship's judgment, there was such an inconsistency between the latter was barred by a submission to the jurisdiction.

Lord Justice Neill and Lord Justice Evans agreed.

Solicitors: Leigh, Day & Co; Vaudreys, Manchester.

Minor's claim against council separate from that of her mother

C (a Minor) v Hackney London Borough Council
Before Lord Justice Bingham, Lord Justice Simon Brown and Lord Justice Saville
[Judgment October 25]

An action brought by a Down's Syndrome girl against a council for damages for illness arising from disrepair to the council house in which her family lived, when her mother had already reached a settlement with the council in separate proceedings, was not an abuse of process and the principle of *res judicata* did not apply.

The Court of Appeal so held in allowing an appeal by the girl, suing by her stepfather and next friend, against a decision of Judge Graham, QC, at Shoreditch County Court, in reinstating her claim with interest secured on it for damages to be assessed.

Order 10, rule 10 of the County Court Rules (SI 1981 No 1687 (L 20) provides:

"(1) Where in any proceedings money is claimed by or on behalf of a person under disability, no settlement, compromise or payment and no acceptance of money paid into court... shall so far as it relates to that person's claim be valid without the approval of the court."

Mr Benet Hytner, QC and Mr Stephen Cottle for the girl; Mr Ian Lewis for the local authority.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that Hackney relied heavily upon *Yat Tung Investment v Do Hong Bank* (1995) AC 581 as authority for the doctrine of *res judicata* in the wider sense to be applied against strangers, and *Talbot v Berkshire County Council* (1994) QB 290 as authority for the claim which could and more conveniently should have been

brought in earlier proceedings.

They contended that the judge was entitled to find as he did that the girl's dependence on her mother created a sufficient nexus between them that they should be regarded as the same party.

That was an impossible argument that stretched the bounds of the doctrine beyond breaking point.

The argument meant that although the girl's claim would be defeated because of her disability and dependence on her mother her two older brothers, lacking that adult nexus with mother, could bring their own separate actions.

That would be not merely curious but paradoxical too having regard to the provisions of Order 10, rules 10 and 11 of the County Court Rules, corresponding with Order 80, rules 10 and 11 of the Rules of the Supreme Court.

His Lordship rejected entirely the submission that *Yat Tung Investment* justified extending the *Talbot* principle, that an unlitigated monetary claim was barred if it could have been advanced and established in earlier proceedings, to those not themselves parties to the earlier proceedings.

All that said, it should not be taken as any encouragement to lawyers or their clients to follow the course adopted here.

It was plainly in the public interest to have a single action in which the claims of all affected members of the household were included, rather than a multiplicity of actions.

It was unjustifiably, separate actions were brought and the fault was found to lie with the solicitor, a wasted costs order might well be appropriate.

To some extent, however, the remedy lay with the defendant

borough. When faced with a tenant's claim it could inquire whether or not other claims were also to be advanced.

There was one further matter of general importance arising. During the course of the hearing the court was told that the claimant's mother had been seriously injured by the council's negligence in such cases proceedings were brought by the tenant alone and yet settlement was reached, or indeed judgment given, on behalf of the whole family.

However convenient that might appear to be, it could plainly create serious problems. So far as other adult members of the family were concerned there was probably little difficulty.

Any attempt to claim a fresh would doubtless be met by a successful plea that the tenant settled as their agent or indeed on general abuse of process grounds.

With regard to those under a disability, however, the position was very different. The practice said to be followed wholly ignored the effect of Order 10, rules 10 and 11. That might well disadvantage both the defendants and those under disability.

With regard to the defendants they lost the protection of the settlement, or judgment against future claims. As to those under disability, Order 10 was designed to safeguard their interests and the practice now followed clearly subverted that purpose.

It created a serious risk that on occasions impoverished parents would be tempted to sacrifice their children's long term interests in favour of more immediate gain.

The practice wherever presently followed should cease.

Lord Justice Bingham and Lord Justice Saville agreed.

Solicitors: Dowse & Co, Hackney; Mr Christopher Hinde, Hackney.

Investment test for fixing amount of damages

Thomas v Brighton Health Authority
Before Mr Justice Collins
[Judgment November 7]

In determining the quantum of damages in a personal injuries action, the test was not whether it would be prudent to invest in equities but whether to invest in index linked gilts instead would achieve the necessary object with greater precision.

Mr Justice Collins so held in the Queen's Bench Division when determining the quantum of damages in a personal injury action brought by the plaintiff, who was born on June 30, 1989, in the Royal Sussex County Hospital, under the management of the defendant authority.

The plaintiff suffered from marked ataxoid cerebral palsy as a result of the defendant's negligence and/or breach of statutory duty. The defendant admitted liability. The matter came before the court to determine quantum only.

Mr Robert Owen, QC and Mr Philip Havers, QC, for the plaintiff; Mr Kieran Connan, QC, and Miss Christina Lambert for the defendant.

MR JUSTICE COLLINS said that practitioners were in a state of uncertainty as to which direction the courts would take in the light of the greater prominence given to investment in index linked gilts by the Law Commission's report No 224 of September 1994 *Structured Settlements and Investment of Periodical Damages* (Cm 2646) and the unreported decision of Judge Wilcock in *Wells v Wells* (June 13, 1995).

The issue to decide was whether, having regard to the availability of indexed linked gilts, a return of 3 per cent instead of the traditional 4 to 5 per cent should be applied.

His Lordship added that it was important to identify any index linked gilts would provide an average net return of 3 per cent against one of 4 and 5 per cent if equities predominated.

The reason was the greater risk involved in the latter that the capital invested would diminish in value.

Further, in his Lordship's view, there were no disadvantages in indexed linked gilts investments which were not also reflected in equities.

In his Lordship's opinion, the court ought to recognise the existence of a means which was capable of dealing with so conjunctural a factor as compensation of the plaintiff in damages with greater precision.

Solicitors: Compton Carr; Hempsons.

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BARRETT, JAMES BARRETT of Chichester, Sussex, late of Chichester, Sussex, died on 11 March 1995. His estate is being administered by the executor, Mr J. Barrett, of Chichester, Sussex. Any person claiming an interest in the estate of the deceased person should apply to the court for an order that the estate of the deceased person be administered by a trustee of the court. The court will then appoint a trustee of the court to administer the estate of the deceased person. The court will then appoint a trustee of the court to administer the estate of the deceased person.

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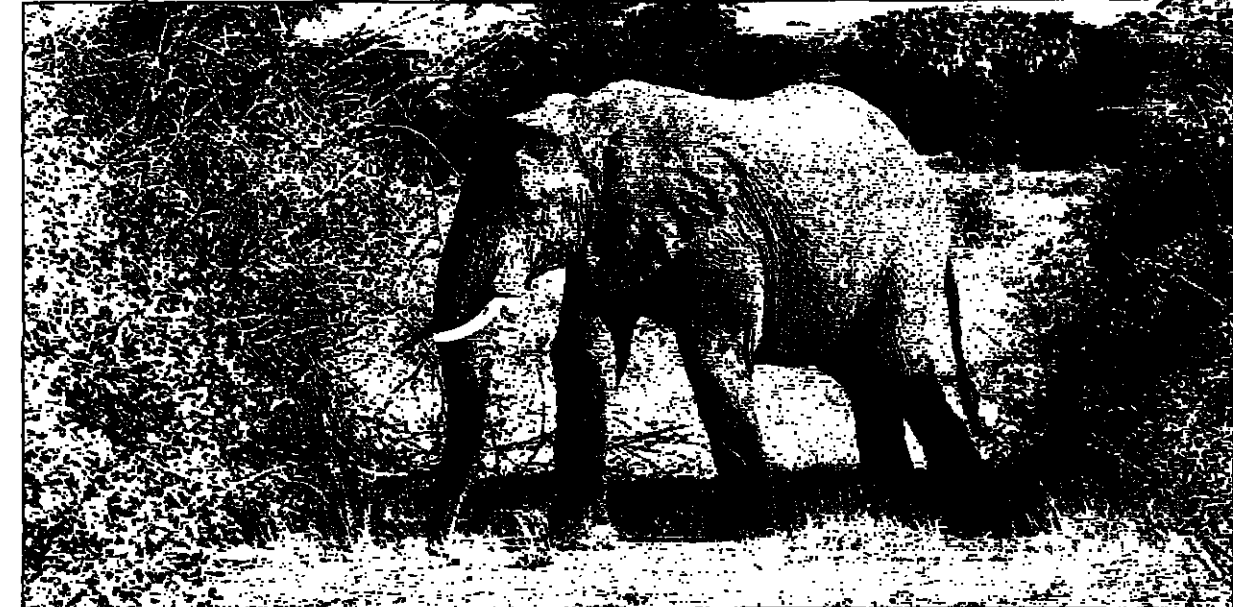
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FA affirms reasons for ban on Graham

By JOHN GOODBODY

THE George Graham affair was rekindled yesterday with the publication of the Football Association disciplinary commission's report. It found the former Arsenal manager's evidence on why he took money from a Norwegian agent "wholly unconvincing".

The eight-page summary reveals that Arsenal were warned ten months before they dismissed Graham in February that the Inland Revenue knew that members of the club's coaching staff had received money after transfers to the FA Carling Premiership club.

The report explains why Graham was banned from football for a year, after being found guilty of misconduct in July, and also gives new details about the transfer of Pal Lydersen from IK Start, of Norway, to Highbury.

Graham has defended himself in his recent book, *The Glory and the Grief*, by repeating his assertion that he received "unsolicited gifts" and not an illegal bung from Rune Hauge, the Norwegian agent, for his advice in dealings in the transfer market.

The FA stated yesterday: "It was his [Graham's] choice to reopen public debate on his case. As a private citizen outside football, he had a right to do so. Equally the FA has a right, and now a responsibility, to set the record straight."

In its report, the three-man commission concluded that Graham's evidence, "that he made only brief inquiries as to the reason for the payment and as to his satisfaction with the explanations given to him by Mr Hauge", was "wholly unconvincing".

It said that, when Graham received £140,500 in bundles of cash in December 1991, he must have "reflected on the fact that he had only recently succeeded in negotiating a cut for Mr Hauge in relation to the Lydersen deal. Similar thoughts must have occurred

to him when he received another payment so soon after the [John] Jensen deal".

In August 1992, Hauge was also involved in the transfer of Jensen from Brøndby, in Denmark, to Highbury. Four weeks later, Graham received £285,000 in a bank draft from Hauge.

In his autobiography, Graham said that he received the £140,500 as a "gift" for steering Peter Schmeichel and Andrei Kanchelskis to Manchester United.

The commission states that a letter from the Inland Revenue, dated April 22, 1994, to Arsenal's accountants, raised concerns about evidence that "... coaching staff have received payments or monies... which have emanated from transfer fees paid by your client". This was discussed at a meeting on April 26, 1994, at which Graham, Ken Friar, the Arsenal managing director, and Steve Burtenshaw, the chief scout, were present. At that meeting, Burtenshaw admitted receiving money from Hauge.

Graham did not tell anyone about the payments until a meeting at Highbury on September 19, 1994, and he transferred £465,500 to Arsenal on December 1, 1994. This represented the total amount received from Hauge, together with interest. Arsenal later dismissed Graham because he had not "acted in the best interests of the club".

The commission also disclosed new details of the £500,000 transfer of Lydersen to Arsenal, for which the Norwegian club then paid Interclub. Hauge's company in the Channel Islands, £308,000. The commission concluded: "Mr Graham's behaviour in the Lydersen transfer was difficult to understand, and the lack of disclosure either to IK Start or to Arsenal of the true position does him no credit. But this is not to say he must have dealt for his own benefit."



Brown, the Runcorn chairman, in front of the new stand at Canal Street that he hopes will be full tomorrow

Runcorn stand test of dedication

Walter Gammie on a club that has had to dig deep and is overdue a kind break



RUNCORN, the small, unfashionable club from Cheshire who have tenaciously clung to their place in the Vauxhall Conference since arriving with a bang to win the title in 1982, will tread warily in the first round when they play Wigan Athletic at Canal Street tomorrow.

Two years ago, they had approached a tie against Hull City with all the happy anticipation of the have-a-go glory seekers that make the day such a compelling part of the English sporting calendar, only for it to usher in a "trial by earth, wind and fire" that tested the club's resilience to the core. Twenty-nine minutes into the match, Hull scored, and as their supporters surged forward, the wall behind the goal collapsed.

Peter Saunders-Lee, then the Runcorn vice-chairman, said: "Luckily, nobody was seriously injured. The worst casualty was a young police lady standing behind the goal." The match was abandoned and replayed at Witton Albion — and duly lost.

The next blow was the loss of the roof of a stand in gales, swiftly followed by a fire that

destroyed the main stand. "It happened on an evening shortly after a board meeting," Saunders-Lee said. "One or two of the directors had crossed to the social club when three-quarters of an hour later they noticed flames coming from the area of the stand. There were force seven or eight winds blowing and they whipped the flames up and literally engulfed the stand." The cause of the blaze remains a mystery.

It was not until January that Runcorn were able to return home, after playing their matches at Witton and Northwich Victoria. Canal Street now boasts a new stand and boxed steel fencing that Saunders-Lee said makes it, in the eyes of the Conference management committee, one of the league's safest grounds. "It's just a pity we can't fill it each week," he said.

Therein lies the rub. The work left the club £100,000 out of pocket and, crushed within the area's countless sporting attractions, the average attendance of 600 remains discouragingly small. Certainly, Runcorn cannot afford full-time executives or managers.

In John Carroll, a sheet-metal worker, they have a manager who has already conjured two Wembley appearances in the FA Trophy, and who has proved a master of retrieving lost talents to pass on for the club's profit. Paul Robertson, a left back, was sold last week to Doncaster Rovers, following on the heels of Gary Brabin, now the Doncaster captain.

Carroll's recollections of the days in exile are grim. "It wasn't just the Saturdays," he said. "We couldn't train. There was no electricity. I remember one day we managed

to get a bit of light and then the showers wouldn't work. We drove home with mud all over our legs." Carroll, though, firmly states the club's philosophy: "We don't feel sorry for ourselves. Whatever we may think privately, we can't let the job get us down. We just allow a few whiskies to go down as well."

Carroll has stitched together a new strike-force of Mike Bignall, 18, a quicksilver former Wrexham reserve, Mark Farrington, 30, on furlough from Norwegian football, and Colin Taylor, 23, formerly a frustrated stand-in for the Bull and Mutch pairing at Wolverhampton Wanderers. The combination helps to make the tie "winnable". John Brown, the chairman, said:

Brown talks longingly of a run to the third round. "Altrincham did it and went to Tottenham last year," he said. So did Runcorn — once. In 1939, they were drawn against Preston North End, the holders, a memory still strong in the twinkling eye of George Worrall, the club president. Of such are made the dreams that sustain a band whose dedication cannot be shaken.

Harris rewarded for Welsh success

JUSTYN HARRIS, the Warrington and Wales rugby league utility back who is being courted by several Welsh rugby union clubs, was yesterday named John Smith's international player of the year for his performances as Wales won the European championship in April and reached the semi-finals of the World Cup last month (Christopher Irvine writes).

Harris, who qualifies for Wales by parentage, sees his immediate future in league, but said that he could end up playing both codes. Alex Murphy received the Rugby League Writers' Association merit award in recognition of his 40 years as a player, coach and commentator.

Karl Harrison, the Halifax forward who played for England during the World Cup, was yesterday banned for two matches after his dismissal for a high challenge during his side's defeat at St Helens last Sunday. Harrison, 31, a prop forward, was also fined £100 by the Rugby Football League's disciplinary committee.

Nemeth encouraged

BASKETBALL: Laszlo Nemeth, the coach, expressed encouragement after England were beaten 95-87 by Lithuania in the Zuercher Classic near Amsterdam on Wednesday (Nicholas Harling writes). Lithuania finished second in the European championship in the summer and were without only two players from their full squad.

Rimas Kurtinaitis inspired Lithuania into a 43-24 lead, "but," Nemeth said, "then we guarded him well." England trailed 47-45 at half-time, after which the game was close.

Strauss waltzes off

RUGBY: Tiaan Strauss, right, the former South Africa rugby union captain and No 8, said yesterday that he had signed a two-year contract with Rupert Murdoch's professional Super League to play rugby league in Australia. "I am 30 years old now and feel that I have reached a ceiling here," Strauss said. "I have had a good innings for Western Province and feel it's a good time to change now with two to three years of rugby left in me."



Yacht move approved

YACHTING: Twin trapeze boats such as the Laser 5000 and International 14 may be allowed at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. The International Yacht Racing Union conference in Hamburg yesterday gave its approval to change the mix of Olympic disciplines. The final decision will be taken today. These fast, modern designs would be more entertaining to watch, but there are reservations, particularly among developing nations and traditionalists within the sport.

Hall the best of British

GOLF: Caroline Hall led the British challenge at the Australian Women's Open in Melbourne yesterday after her four-under-par first round of 69. The Englishwoman finished in third place, two shots behind Liselotte Neumann, of Sweden. Jane Geddes, of the United States, was second after a 68. Dale Reid, of Scotland, and Emma-Jane Smith, of England, both went round the Yarra Yarra course in 73, level par, as did Maureen Macill, of Ireland.

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SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

What would you bid on this hand:

♠AK942 ♥73 ♦A5 ♣A764

You open One Spade, your partner bids Six Hearts, you bid Two Spades and your partner bids Six Hearts. In general, when your partner makes an undisciplined leap like that, he is throwing a party to which you have not been invited. If you miss a grand slam it certainly isn't your fault — your partner had several ways to investigate it.

However, when Rob Cliffe held the hand he saw that his partner was likely to have a shapely hand with a minor side suit, and he recognised that, holding three aces, this was a time to gate-crash the party. He bid Seven Hearts. The full deal is shown below:

Dealer North	Love all	IMP's
♠AK942 ♥73 ♦A5 ♣A764		
♠J1063 ♥4 ♦Q1062 ♣10985	N W E S	♠Q87 ♥865 ♦74 ♣KQJ22
♠5 ♥AKQJ1092 ♦KJ983 ♣—		

Contract: Seven Hearts by South. Lead: Ten of Clubs

I held the South hand in a recent Gold Cup match, against a team spearheaded by Nicola Smith and Pat Davies, the leading British women's pair. When all my partner could do was bid Two Spades over my Two Hearts, I decided the bashing approach was best but Cliffe came to my rescue.

I won the club, cashed one high heart and attempted to ruff a diamond with the seven of hearts. Unfortunately East had been dealt the eight of hearts along with the doubleton diamond. Match lost — give West the eight and we would have won.

Seven Hearts is well worth being in at IMP scoring. You make if diamonds are three-three, or four-two with the queen falling, or four-two with the hand with two does not have the eight of hearts. According to double dummy expert Pietro Bernasconi (consulted for sympathy the next day by my teammate Boris Schapiro, after I had gone down), playing as I played is 68.6%. Playing for a spade-diamond squeeze is 54.2%.

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

ABNEY
a. A racing bridle
b. To play the fool
c. A measure of inclination

CARRICKMACROSS

a. A kind of lace
b. Irish lacrosse
c. A hyperbolic rant

DROTKVAETT
a. Pickled cod
b. A stately metre
c. The Spring thaw
FUNICULUS
a. A mountain railway
b. An ancient decanter
c. Part of an insect's foot

Answers on page 44

KEENE on CHESS

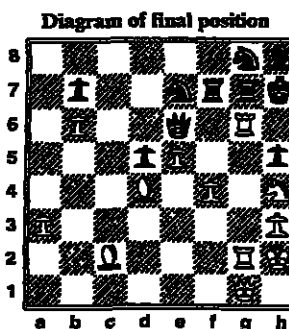
By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Narrow Miss

The international master, James Howell, won a convincing first prize in the Owens-Corning tournament at Wrexham Maelor. Sadly, he missed a grandmaster result by a mere half-point. Here is a sample of his play.

White: Howell
Black: Hartmann
Owens-Corning, Wrexham Maelor, October 1995

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
♠e4	♠Nf3	♠Bb5	♠Ba4	♠c3	♠d4	♠O-O	♠Re1	♠Nbd2	♠Nf1	♠Ng3	♠h3	♠Bc2	♠Bb3	♠Qd2	♠Rd1	♠Nf2	♠Rf1	♠O-O	♠cxd4	♠a5	♠Ne2	♠Kh1	♠Bd3	♠g4	♠B4	♠Rg1	♠Rg2	♠Rd1	♠B5	♠Nf3	♠Nh4	♠Kh2	♠a3	♠b6	♠Qb1	♠Ng3	♠Ne2	♠Bc2	♠Rf3
♠a5	♠Nc6	♠a6	♠d6	♠Bd7	♠Nf6	♠Bc7	♠O-O	♠Rf8	♠Bf8	♠g6	♠Bf7	♠Rf8	♠h6	♠Kf7	♠Qe8	♠Rd8	♠Bc8	♠Ng8	♠cxd4	♠f5	♠Bc6	♠Nc7	♠Rd7	♠Qc8	♠Rd8	♠Qd7	♠Rf8	♠a5	♠a4	♠Rf7	♠Bf6	♠Rf7	♠c5	♠Rf8	♠Qb8	♠Qd7	♠Qd6	♠Rf7	♠Qf8



Paris Grand Prix

The final leg of the Intel Grand Prix continues today in Paris until November 12, the venue being the Espace Pierre Cardin, near the Place de la Concorde. Participants fighting for the \$160,000 prize fund include Garry Kasparov, Viswanathan Anand, Vladimir Kramnik, Michael Adams, Jon Speelman and the French prodigy, 12-year-old Etienne Bacrot. Spectators are welcome and those requiring information on ticket prices and playing times can ring Paris +33 1 45633000.

Times World Championship Book

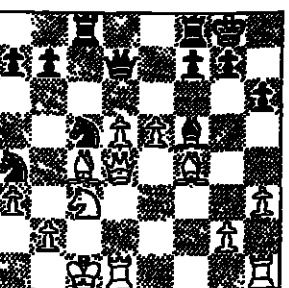
All games of the world title match are now available with commentary by Raymond Keene in a Times book, *World Chess Championship: Kasparov v Anand* (Basilford £9.99). Credit card orders on 01376 327901 (please quote 5/655).

Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

This position is from the game Vetemaa - Shabalov, USSR 1986. In this position, Black won with a spectacular move which increased the pressure against White's queenside to intolerable limits. Can you see what he played?



Solution on page 44

Postponement of heady feast likely to result in flat beer

Come the new year and the onset of the festive season, we will welcome once more with open arms the midwinter carnival of the international season. At that moment, the winter will no longer seem quite so long; but what are we to make of the report by England's commission that recommends that the five nations' championship should be shifted to May.

Already, at Scotland's suggestion, the tournament is to be moved so as to begin in February next season, not January, and to extend into April. This was decided on the grounds that it hardly made sense for six of the ten

matches to be played, as this season, during January and February, when Europe is likely to suffer the worst of the winter weather.

What, though, of moving the tournament to the end of the season? It is a proposal that will sooner or later have to be considered. It has been mooted before and cast aside. While the game remained amateur, it seemed unrealistic to expect players to devote a whole month to playing rugby. Their employers might complain, but this argument may no longer be quite so persuasive as players are now being paid for their efforts.

Another reason for wishing to reschedule the champion-

ship is that it will help to remove the congestion of fixtures during an important period of league and cup competitions.

With European tournaments beckoning, the burden is going to increase rather than decrease, so that, in the upper echelons, rugby will come to be seen as not solely a Saturday activity.

Accommodating club demands and national requirements is always a delicate balancing act. Wales and England have attempted to minimise the difficulties by arranging that players do not perform for their clubs the week before an international match. Moving the dates of



GERALD DAVIES

Rugby Commentary

the five nations' championship might alleviate the problem, but would not do away with it.

Two matches could be played on one afternoon, be it Saturday or Sunday, with staggered kick-off times. ITV made such a proposal five years ago. It was rejected then, but the new financial imperatives may force the rugby authorities finally to

accept the suggestion. How-
ever, to play two matches on consecutive days, Saturday and Sunday, would provide unacceptable levels of saturation.

In any practical assessment of how best to incorporate and rationalise a lengthening fixture list, the removal of the international competition to the end of the season would be administratively sensible. It

would also provide a remedy to the headache that some club coaches have because of the dual allegiance of their international players.

However, I have an itch which will not go away. Sensible though this change sounds, would it be wise? The tournament is a huge success. It might, you say, be bigger still. Who knows?

At present, after almost five months of club rugby, the championship tangles the dulled palate. Coming when it does, it provides a focus of sporting attention during a bleak time.

For nine or ten weeks, it represents a moving, heady feast of a ritual; a kind of

continuous international cultural exchange between the five capitals. An Irish supporter travelling to Cardiff, a Welshman to Edinburgh, an Englishman to Paris, do so for more than just a game of rugby. Eighty minutes is but a brief span in a long weekend.

Play the matches on successive weekends and this situation will disappear. There will be only enough time to move in, see the match, and move on again. After all, there will be another one the next week. Time and money will soon be stretched.

To travel to and from the game on Sunday, with work on Monday, would discourage not so much the profes-

sional player but the spectator.

What of loyalty? Not the least of many surprises since the revolution in August is the wishful expectation, after having declared itself a professional sport, that the spirit and sense of loyalty in rugby should remain as it was. Henceforth, no loyalty should be expected other than to the contract, and the spirit that will prevail is the one guided by the search for money.

Sadly, there is no room for sentiment. What is certain is that, if the change comes about, the five nations' championship would not be the same — but nothing in rugby union is any longer.

Contracts ready for signature

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE Rugby Football Union (RFU), heartened by yesterday's multimillion-pound sponsorship agreement with a mobile telephone company, hopes that England's leading players will be able to sign contracts for the remainder of this season when they meet over the weekend.

Although they seek only a short-term contract at this stage, the players and the union have met several times this season and Don Rutherford, the RFU technical director, said: "The players representatives have seen the contracts, made a few points which will be built into them and we hope they will be in a position to sign."

It is only eight days before the first of England's scheduled seven internationals this season — against South Africa at Twickenham — and the RFU will be anxious to put the contractual situation to bed, knowing that the senior clubs believe that the primary contract should be between themselves and their players.

Indeed, that area remains the most sensitive, in strictly domestic terms, of the package recommended by the RFU Commission on Wednesday. Not only do the clubs seek a single contract which allows them to "hire" their assets to the union for international occasions — like football — but also they want their own ruling body rather than one representative on the proposed RFU board of management.

The latest sponsorship arrangement, with Cellnet, is worth "several million pounds" over a four-year period and will help towards a guaranteed income for each

player of at least £20,000 for the coming season. While that is only half the anticipated figure, it is a base upon which to build.

"There is general satisfaction within the squad," Will Carling, the captain, said. "Everything is so new in the northern hemisphere that it is still hard to know what the figures will be, but this is a good start."

It has been achieved without the addition of a commercial logo on the England jersey. Cellnet is happy to put its mark on training and leisure wear only, and to fund a youth development programme involving the players.

"We are interested in spreading our exposure rather than putting all our eggs into one basket," David Robinson, the RFU treasurer, said. "Any move to put a logo on the match shirt would involve a new figure being put on our deal."

Gary Halpin, the London Irish and Ireland prop, will miss the five nations' championship this winter because of family commitments. He has ruled himself out of international rugby for this season. Ireland's first match is against Fiji tomorrow week.

"I have considered this since the World Cup because I need to spend more time at home," he said. "This does not mean retirement, but I want to opt out of representative commitments for at least this season."

Jonathan Davies will have his first chance to play at stand-off half since returning to Cardiff from rugby league tonight when he dons the No 10 jersey against Cambridge University.

Main refuses to slacken her resolve

By JOHN HENNESSY

STEPHANIE MAIN, the winner two years ago, survived a disturbing incident to take the lead in the Tessa British Ice Skating Championship at Basingstoke yesterday. She won the original programme section from Nancy Manning and Zoe Jones, respectively runners-up last year in the junior and senior championships.

A try from the ice and faltering progress in the step sequence caused a general alarm, explained later as an equipment failure. The top hook in her left boot had broken away, leaving her with a slack lace.

Had the accident happened earlier in her programme, she would have been allowed to skate again, and thereby perhaps repair the failure of only a double toe loop and no second jump in the combination, but it was too late for that. "My foot just buckled under me," she said, but the panic lasted only a few seconds and it is a tribute to her fighting qualities that she was even able to finish her programme, let alone in first place.

Even so, the event threw up another example of the absurdity of the system of marking employed in skating. Only one of the seven judges, Patricia Houghton, placed Main first, whereas three gave Manning, tutored by the Russian School at Stenage, pride of place. Main was given first place because of a majority of seconds.

Manning's highlight was a glittering double axel, but, as with everyone else, a triple jump eluded her when her landing edge slipped away.

A distraught figure yesterday was Jenna Arrowsmith, a close friend of Jones at Swindon, who is injured and so unable to defend the championship she won so surprisingly last year.

This means that she has almost certainly lost any chance of a place in the teams for the European and world championships in Sofia and



Jamie Spiteri, of Queen's Club, cuts a graceful figure during her original programme

Edmonton, Alberta, respectively on the other side of Christmas.

Steven Cousins sets out today in search of his seventh successive men's title, something that neither John Curry

nor Robin Cousins (no relation) was able to achieve. Curry did, in fact, win seven times but he failed successfully to defend his title against Haig Oundjian, now a power behind the scenes in this

country, at Richmond in 1971. A quadruple jump, probably a salschow, is now in Steven Cousins's repertoire and it would be a first here if he were able to bring it off in the free programme tomorrow.

Love gives Chinese taste of golf at the top

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES IN SHENZHEN, CHINA

IT WAS understandable but hardly fair to pair China, the hosts, with the United States, the defending champions, in the first round of the Heineken World Cup at the Mission Hills club here yesterday.

The Chinese, represented by Cheng Jun and Zhang Lianwei, looking decidedly twitchy, were making their debuts. Davis Love III and Fred Couples were playing together for the fourth consecutive time, never having been beaten as a World Cup team.

It was no contest. Love holed from ten feet for a birdie at the 1st while Cheng took six — three putts after being in a bunker — and Zhang, who had the dubious pleasure of hitting the first shot, took five. United States: one under par; China: three over.

By the end of the round, the Chinese had held together well enough to be only seven over, but they were 29th out of 32 and their hopes of finishing in the top 20 on Sunday, if not expired, were faint. The Americans led on 133.11 under, after a 65 by Love and a 68 by Couples, whose five birdies were complemented by his partner's seven, plus an eagle three at the 531-yard sixth.

They were both eclipsed, however, by Hisayuki Sasaki, the Japanese PGA champion, who will never forget his first round in the World Cup. He started with three birdies in a row, went out in 29 and came home in 33, having had 23 putts in all, to set a Cup record of 62. Alas, Hiroshi Goda, his partner, had a 77.

Jesper Parnevik and Jarmo Sandelin of Sweden, on eight under, were second and Scotland, Zimbabwe and Australia were joint third on six under. England, Ireland and Wales were all on 141, three under.

Bruno gets sanction for £10m Tyson bout

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

FRANK BRUNO'S World Boxing Council (WBC) heavyweight title defence against Mike Tyson was yesterday given the go-ahead at the World Boxing Council's convention in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The official sanctioning of the bout, following unsuccessful legal moves by Lennox Lewis, the former champion, to prevent the contest taking place, sets up the rematch for Las Vegas next year.

Frank Warren, Bruno's promoter, who was present at the convention, said: "This will be Frank's mandatory defence. The winner will have to defend against the next mandatory challenger by September next year."

"The date is still to be confirmed but March 16 is the one we are looking at. I'm delighted, justice was seen to be done. The courts in Britain had thrown out Lewis's action against Bruno and the WBC. Bruno will receive the biggest purse of any British fighter."

Bruno could receive around £10 million for tackling Tyson a second time. Tyson was champion when Bruno was stopped in five rounds in Las Vegas in 1989.

Lewis, who appeared to have qualified as mandatory challenger for Bruno's first defence, after beating Lionel Butler in a WBC-sanctioned final eliminator in May, is continuing legal action in the United States to stop the bout.

On the domestic front, Neville Brown, from Burton-on-Trent, can expect a tough contest when he defends his British 'middleweight' title against Shaun Cummins at Derby tonight. Brown fared badly in his last two bouts, losing on points to the American, Anthony Ivory, and surviving with difficulty before beating Trevor Ambrose, of Bournemouth.

INSTANT PRIZES UP TO £2,200 — LONGEST WORD WINS £5,000

£75,000

THE SUNDAY TIMES SCRABBLE

WAGON SHANK ELUSIVE PRIZE

Play £75,000 Scrabble

For the next three weeks, you can play our new £75,000 Scrabble game using the numbers printed in *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*.

The *Times* Scrabble scratchcard has four games on it, one for each week until November 25. Numbers will be printed in *The Times* everyday. Printed below is the fifth set of numbers to play Game B in *The Times* only. More numbers will appear tomorrow.

There is a £5,000 jackpot to be won every week when you play our Longest Word game, FORESTALLED, by using letters you reveal from *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*.

There are two ways to play for prizes: 1. Printed below are two numbers which you should scratch off on *The Times* Game B grid on your Scrabble gamecard today. Do not scratch any other numbers. By scratching the numbers you will reveal two letters. Using only the letters revealed on Game B, see if you can match any words on

the Scrabble board. Each letter you have revealed can only be used once. If you can match a word on the board, you have won a prize and must make a claim today.

2. LONGEST WORD GAME. You can use any combination of the letters revealed this week on *The Sunday Times* Game 2 and *The Times* Game B to make the word FORESTALLED. If you succeed, ring the Scrabble hotline to make a claim for this week's £5,000 prize.

If more than one valid claim is made for a prize, the money will be shared equally among the claimants.

If you did not receive a gamecard call 0171-867 0404, between 9.30am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

GAME B PRIZE WINNERS
The £1,000 prize (POACH) was shared by Mr G Barnes of Richmond, Surrey; Mr J Strudwick of South Woodford, Mrs H Oliver of Prestatyn, North Wales and Mrs D Greig of Aberdeen.

HOW TO CLAIM YOUR PRIZE

If you reveal all the letters of any word from Game B of your Scrabble gamecard, claim your prize by calling the Scrabble hotline on 0171-867 0406 today, between 9.30am and 5pm. Have your gamecard with you when you claim.
Late claims will not be accepted.

THESE ARE THE NUMBERS TO SCRATCH OFF GAME B ON YOUR TIMES CARD

137 121

SPEAR'S GAMES

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Toronto 109, Sacramento 106; Boston 113, Phoenix 105; Detroit 100, Portland 100 (OT); Miami 80, Houston 82; Orlando 130, New Jersey 122 (5-OT); Washington 101, Charlotte 85; San Antonio 111, Vancouver 82; Denver 117, Seattle 122; Utah 108, LA Lakers 98; LA Clippers 92, Atlanta 100.

BOXING
YORK HALL, Bethnal Green: Commonwealth cruiserweight championship (12-round) Chris Oka (Croatia), 100 lb, 15, Southern Area featherweight championship (10-round) P J Gallagher (Wood Green) vs Justin Murphy (Hove) 1st 6th Middle (1st) 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th 10th 11th 12th 13th 14th 15th 16th 17th 18th 19th 20th 21st 22nd 23rd 24th 25th 26th 27th 28th 29th 30th 31st 32nd 33rd 34th 35th 36th 37th 38th 39th 40th 41st 42nd 43rd 44th 45th 46th 47th 48th 49th 50th 51st 52nd 53rd 54th 55th 56th 57th 58th 59th 60th 61st 62nd 63rd 64th 65th 66th 67th 68th 69th 70th 71st 72nd 73rd 74th 75th 76th 77th 78th 79th 80th 81st 82nd 83rd 84th 85th 86th 87th 88th 89th 90th 91st 92nd 93rd 94th 95th 96th 97th 98th 99th 100th 101st 102nd 103rd 104th 105th 106th 107th 108th 109th 110th 111th 112th 113th 114th 115th 116th 117th 118th 119th 120th 121st 122nd 123rd 124th 125th 126th 127th 128th 129th 130th 131st 132nd 133rd 134th 135th 136th 137th 138th 139th 140th 141st 142nd 143rd 144th 145th 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Lampard set to promote World Cup ambitions

FROM JENNY MACARTHUR IN MILLSTREET, CO CORK

DI LAMPARD, one of ten British riders competing here, intends to fulfil the first leg of a dual ambition when she rides Abbervail Dream in the Volvo World Cup qualifier tomorrow night.

Already lying in second place in the Western European League for the World Cup after finishing second in the Helsinki qualifier and third in Oslo last month, Lampard, 38, needs only one more good result to secure her place in the final in Geneva next April.

"Competing in Geneva is my first aim," Lampard, the 1994 Queen Elizabeth II Cup winner and runner-up this year, said yesterday. "Then, all being well, it's Atlanta that I'll be aiming at."

Abbervail Dream, the horse which has propelled her to the forefront of the sport, was bought by her present owner, Robert Verburg, from Ireland as a three-year-old. Two years later, Lampard, who was based with her trainer, Dietmar Ackerman, at his yard in Leicestershire, was invited to ride him.

Despite an early setback — she broke her leg when the young horse somersaulted at a practice fence at the 1993 Horse of the Year Show — Lampard's patient schooling was soon rewarded. Her win in the Queen Elizabeth II Cup was followed by success in the Olympic Starspotter competition at Wembley.

This year she was selected for the British team for the Hickstead Nations Cup but had to withdraw when the horse sustained a foot injury and was sidelined for six weeks. He recovered in time to compete at the Rotterdam and Dublin Nations Cup events later in the season.

This is Lampard's first attempt at the winter World Cup circuit. "Normally Abbervail would have done enough by this time of year," Lampard said, "but because he missed a lot of the early part of the season, I just decided to give it a go."

Ironically, she is not qualified for the Olympia World Cup event in London next month. "I would love to go but because of his injury he has not earned enough money this year to qualify — I'll just have to make sure that I do well tomorrow," she said.

While the international riders — including Nick Skelton and John and Michael Whitaker, of Britain, warmed up for their first international class yesterday, junior riders on their 12.2h ponies held the audience enthralled in the opening event of the show yesterday afternoon.

The competition, in which diminutive riders competed on ponies named "Mighty Midget" and "Little Chopper", was won by 12-year-old Michael Kearns, of Co Sligo, on his Dublin winner, Lisnacbray Gold.

His father, Colm, had advised him to "go for it" in the 13-pony jump-off. Obedient to the letter, Michael raced round the ring, taking a flyer at the last to finish more than two seconds ahead of the runner-up, Mark Beecher, on Loughnashua Jack.

Kearns revealed that his main worry had been Robert Whitaker, the son of John Whitaker and the only British rider in the event. But Whitaker, a former winner of the competition, had a refusal at the double and incurred a further four faults on the beautifully turned out Fontwell Rasputin.

Over the obstacles to put Millstreet on the map

The qualifying competition for the Federation Equestre Internationale Volvo World Cup final in Geneva next April is taking place at present in Millstreet, Co Cork.

There was a time when people asked "what number Mill Street?" and horsebox drivers stopped policemen in the capital city of the south of Ireland to inquire the whereabouts of the thoroughfare. "Thirty miles northwest, off the road from Mallow to Killarney," they were informed, "and it is Millstreet not Mill Street."

Noel C. Duggan — the "C" was brought into play to ensure that he would be taken seriously — was born in the village to which his great grandfather came to build the railway at the end of the potato famine in 1848.



FREUD ON FRIDAY



Few riders of world repute have yet to perform on Noel C. Duggan's hallowed green sawdust at Millstreet. Photograph: Ken Griffiths

Great grandfather's son worked for a local general merchant, saved the boss's daughter from drowning in the Blackwater River and, though a confirmed bachelor, he married her two weeks after the rescue. It was grandfather Duggan who set up the business which became Noel C. Duggan Ltd, has expanded from hardware to "for all your structural steel building requirements" and owns multitudinous parcels of prime Cork land as well.

And it was Noel Duggan, the second of 11 children, who put Millstreet on the map. He left school at the age of 13 upon the death of his father; served an apprenticeship in the hardware trade in Roscommon, came home four years later, sold one of the family cows and used the

money to buy a bicycle. He then borrowed another £40 and set up shop in grandfather's old premises.

He turned down an offer to become a jockey (because he had a family of 16 to support) and then flourished the way small, industrious Irishmen who look like leprechauns and keep off the bottle sometimes do; everything he touched turned to gold. In 1973, he ran a small horse-show and it got bigger each year, not just structurally — the venue is now the size of a football pitch, covered and seats 6,000 — but professionally: there are few riders of world repute who have not performed on Noel C's hallowed green sawdust.

The "break", if you discount a European Commu-

nity grant of £3 million to help build the Green Glens Arena on the outskirts of the village, came in 1993: the Eurovision Song Contest in Sweden was won by Linda Martin, of Dublin, singing *Why Me?* written by Johnny Logan, whose father used to belt out *Rose of Tralee* the way some people have dandruff.

The next day, Duggan wrote to RTE, Ireland's national television company, suggesting that Millstreet might be the suitable location for the next year's contest. Two months later, having heard nothing, he asked what was going on and was told that two months was about the time it took the authorities to stop laughing.

It was then that he invoked the middle initial — "to

convince them" — and put in some serious work.

"The rest is history" is not a phrase that I use, but the 1994 Eurovision Song Contest was held in Millstreet. An estimated 250,000 people came to look at the venue and benefited the local economy by £5 million. Chris Eubank fought Steve Collins at Millstreet earlier this year; 38,000 people attended *Disney on Ice* in the arena; a £40,000 prize bingo session drew 7,500 people who all left at 5.30pm in order to be home in time for more bingo. A rock star called Meatloaf is engaged to sing in what was, until 15 years ago, among the ten shabbiest towns in Ireland. It is now among the ten most desirable.

Noel C and his wife Man-

reen asked me to lunch: boiled bacon, apple sauce, mashed potatoes, grain of cauliflower and they offered me a drink, which is kept for visitors. They have two bottles, both containing Hennessy Cognac: one bigger than the other.

In the covered ring a few hundred yards from their handsome home, horses in class C jump to qualify for Sunday's final, which will count towards next year's World Cup.

Sixteen nations are represented at Millstreet. King Hussein's daughter is a competitor, the place will be buzzing again and Noel C, after going into his pleasure-dome for a television interview, a check of the ambulance room and a fast

perusal of the sponsors' boards, drives me off, past the station that his great grandfather helped to build, to a 450-acre site around Drishane Castle which he has acquired: in God's good time, which is likely to be quite soon, he will construct a conference centre, hotel, spa, golf course and pub — which he would like me to open.

I ask if there might not be planning objections.

He says: "We overcome all obstacles." In the covered ring, John Whitaker, Lansink and King Hussein's daughter, to name but a few, are cumulating his fine example. Nick Skelton is the favourite to take the grade A championship on Sunday but, whatever the result, Noel C will be the winner.

Harris excels but Chaloner goes out

FROM COLIN McQUILLAN IN NICOSIA

THE extraordinary progress of Mark Chaloner, from Lincoln, in his first world Open squash championship ended here yesterday, but the blow for Britain was soon softened as Del Harris, from Essex, defeated Rodney Eyles, the No 2 seed from Australia, 15-13, 10-15, 15-12, 12-15, 15-12 in another quarter-final.

After Chaloner's success over Brett Martin, the No 4 seed, in the previous round, Harris's splendid return to form at the age of 26, destroyed Australia's prospects of domination here. Craig Rowland, their fourth-string, now carries Antipodean hopes after his finest performance to date had accounted for Chaloner 17-15, 12-15, 15-7, 15-6.



Jackman: meets top seed

He meets Harris today for a place in the final.

"To be frank, I was a bit lucky to get the opening game on a penalty stroke in the tie-break after trailing 10-12," Rowland admitted afterwards. "Then he took the

second game pretty well, so I thought I should just go out and attack him."

It was a ploy that bore immediate benefits. Rowland, 24, who put Chris Walker, of England, out in the first round and Craig Van der Wath, of South Africa, in the second, produced stinging front-court nicks to take him to 8-1 and then 13-4 in three hands of the third game and to 10-3 in two hands of the fourth.

Chaloner, also 24 and a late selection as fourth string for England in next week's world team championship in Cairo, was not disgraced. His first appearance in the main draw was only due to the last-minute withdrawal of Peter Marshall. He had defeated his compatriot Philip Whitlock and Martin to reach the last eight.

Perhaps his success in the previous round had left him drained. Certainly, he slowed down in the later stages against Rowland, whom he had beaten from 2-0 down in their previous meeting.

In the women's grand prix event, Cassandra Jackman, from Norfolk, carried English interest into a semi-final against Michelle Martin, the world champion and top seed from Australia, by rallying to defeat Suzanne Horner, the England No 1 from Yorkshire, 3-9, 8-10, 9-4, 9-6, 9-3.

The second women's semi-final is an all-Australian affair between Sarah Fitzgerald and Liz Irving, who yesterday defeated Fiona Caves, the British champion from Gloucester, 9-7, 8-10, 9-3, 9-6.

Results, page 43

Friends and rivals climb to Hill's defence

FROM OLIVER HOLT IN ADELAIDE

THE organisers are billing the Australian Grand Prix here on Sunday as the grand finale, but it feels more like the last gasp. It has been a long, hard Formula One season for the drivers, titles have been won and lost, and all that appears to remain is the repairing of reputations and the denial of rumours.

Michael Schumacher is still aiming to beat Nigel Mansell's record of nine wins in a season, but the build-up yesterday was dominated by a concerted defence of the beleaguered Damon Hill.

After Hill's poor showing in the Pacific

and Japanese grands prix, his failure to win the world drivers' title and his team's subsequent loss of the constructors' championship, there were persistent rumours that Williams were gearing themselves to ditch the Englishman in favour of Heinz-Harald Frentzen, by buying out the German's contract with Sauber and paying Hill hefty compensation.

Hill's representatives poured scorn on the idea, however. They said that, even if Williams had attempted to compensate Hill, they could not have fulfilled the other contractual obligation of guaranteeing him a drive in 16 grands prix.

Then David Coulthard, Hill's team-

mate, who is bound for McLaren next season, said he saw Hill as the man to beat in 1996. "Williams will have a very strong package and Damon will be right up there," he said. "The criticism he has had has been unreasonable."

Jackie Stewart, the former triple world champion, also leapt to Hill's defence. "He will come back next year and win races and, if the opportunity arises, the championship, too," Stewart said. Hill himself had been "bloody annoyed" by the speculation. "It is not a top," he said, "but I am prepared to take the rough with the smooth. At least we have the chance to go out with a win here and put it all behind us."

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 42

ABNEY

(c) A small hand instrument used by surveyors for measuring slopes and angles above the horizon. An eponym from Sir William de Wivelesie Abney (1844-1921). "The Abney level or clinometer, which consists of a sighting tube fixed to a semicircular vertical plate marked in degrees, with a spirit level attached to its index, is used to measure vertical angles."

CARRICKMACROSS

(a) The name of a town in County Monaghan, Ireland, used to designate certain forms of lace made there. A toponym. Queen Victoria, letter 1861, published in *Dearest Child*, 1964: "A very pretty flourish, but it is not Carrick Macross."

DROTKVAETT

(b) Court metre, a complex verse-form employed by the scaldic poets of early Scandinavia. From the Old Norse *drótt* the king's household + *kvæði* a poem. "Drotkvætt has three trochees, or properly spindles in each line; but dactyls may also be used in the two first places."

FUNICULUS

(c) A bit of an insect's foot. "The funiculus, a small cartilaginous cord, passing through a minute orifice of the Proctodaeum, just above the point where the footstalk is fixed, to an opposite hole above it."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1... Qb5! cannot be captured by either knight. 2... b4-sharp on account of 3... Nb3 mate. White tried 2... Rd2 to defend b2, but then 2... Nc3 3... bxc3 3... Bxb5 Nb3 mate. 3... Qb1 mate followed.

SPORTS LETTERS

Arsenal set European example

From Mr Laurence Kingsley
Sir, I was astonished to read (report, November 3) that the FA is to investigate the failure in European competition of English football clubs.

No mention is made of the fact that Arsenal succeeded in beating teams such as Auxerre, Paris Saint-Germain and Parma, all teams of superior technique, by the tactical skill of their manager, George Graham.

Arsenal, of course, are always treated as a special case. Having shaken off the tag of "lucky Arsenal", they are now known as "boring Arsenal".

Leaving that aside, an FA investigation is totally unnecessary. Everyone who follows football, whether as player, supporter or administrator, knows that the real reason for English football's failure in the international arena is that for 30 years technical skills have been totally ignored at the expense of speed and fitness.

Yours faithfully,
LAURENCE KINGSLEY,
6 Woodside Road,
New Malden,
Surrey.

From Mr G. Wallace

Sir, With reference to the failure of English teams in European competition, I think that I can save Terry Venables and Graham Kelly the trouble of organising a post mortem with the managers of the beleaguered teams.

I have it on the highest

authority that Johnny Foreigner has not gone about things in the proper manner and has cheated our brave lads. As we all know, in order to play the game the basic fundamentals must be observed: a sound cash-flow at all clubs, a flourishing club shop, maximised marketing opportunities and at least two changes of designer sportswear every 18 months.

Some of the so-called European elite thumb their nose at such sound practice, preferring to encourage children as young as seven or eight to develop football skills by playing the game. This sickening habit is later encouraged to the detriment of their players being unable to hump the ball for 50 yards and kick lumps out of each other. They develop a sporting clubs which spread the base of community interest, thus encouraging the best of local talent to come through the ranks of the club.

Let us continue to starve the grass roots of financial and moral support. Who needs youngsters coming up through local football into the professional game? Let us have more confusing coaching schemes and less emphasis on enjoying the game. You do not need to be able to play the game to buy replica shirts.

Yours faithfully,
G. WALLACE,
5 Westminster Drive,
Whitcham Highway,
Gateshead,
Tyne and Wear.

Leaving the best cast till last

From Mr David Walton

Sir, Brian Clarke's article ("Eureka! Secret of successful angling revealed", November 6) will have encouraged many anglers, who have hitherto returned home empty-handed after a day's fishing. His advice to have "one last cast" (possibly even at the start of the day), which can often catch a fish, could render the many learned volumes written on how to catch trout quite superfluous.

I know this advice works. Forty years ago — on holiday in Devon — my father and I fished for salmon for a fortnight on the Torridge, first in drought and then in spate conditions. On the last day, after 13 consecutive blank days and several thousand casts to no avail, I said that I had had enough, but would "have three last casts". My father bet me £1,000 that I would not catch a salmon with them.

On my first cast into the flooded river I pretended I had hooked a fish. When he discovered I was joking, my father walked off up the bank to the car, out of sight and

hearing. My second cast was equally fruitless, but on the third (and last) cast I hooked a salmon. It took 20 minutes of calling for assistance (and the salmon tailed) before my father returned to see what was keeping me. When he saw my rod bent, he assumed I was again pretending. Eventually he realised I was not, but he then tried to renegotiate our bet, since the force of the water and the steepness of the bank meant that I would have been quite unable to land the salmon on my own.

I do not remember the exact details, but I think we finally settled on £500 for the fish hooked on "the last cast"; it was finally landed with my father's help, but my bank statement does not reveal whether he paid up. In any event, the excellent advice given by my ancestor, Isaac Walton, in his *Compleat Angler* remains valid for fish as well as cash: "No man can lose what he never had."

Yours faithfully,
DAVID WALTON,
The Old Rectory, Tretire,
St Owen's Cross, Hereford.

Cut competition

From Mr Maryn Beckett

Sir, Nobody who considers the short-term, short-sighted attitude of the FA will be in the least surprised at the parlous state of English football.

The FA is reported (November 3) to be "threatened by impressive performances from its youth teams", but to have "particular concern about the development of players aged between 16 and 21".

Can the FA not understand that there is a correlation between the ecstasy and the agony? Although it is satisfying — especially, no doubt, for their coaches — that the national under-16 team beat sides like Belgium and Sweden to qualify for the junior world championships, the means used to achieve this end is directly responsible for five fallow years thereafter.

As foreign footballers, most recently the Norwegian, Henning Berg, have intimidated it is our obsession with winning, from infancy, that is hindering players post-puberty. We have to be prepared to do two things: cut down the competition at junior level and concentrate on skills.

Yours sincerely,
MARTYN BECKETT,
17 The Cottage,
Yarlet Hall, Stafford.

No national need

From Mr John Gage

Sir, Why do we need a national stadium? The competition between venues is no more than an ego trip by the professional promoters and local politicians, self-indulgence by national pride of jingosts and dangerous fervency by people who feel there is overriding merit in where and to whom you are born.

We have plenty of stadiums to cater for all the sports a single stadium would seek to satisfy. The money should be spent on better local facilities. If professional football wants a better national — British or English — venue, let it pay for it.

Wembley is hopeless for soccer. Why sit or stand and only see play close to you beyond that wasted space beside the pitch? If you want an athletics stadium, build it specifically and see if it gets used.

Yours faithfully,
J. GAGE,
78 Cedar Avenue,
Hazlemere, High Wycombe,
Buckinghamshire.

Sports Letters may be sent by fax to 0171-762 5211. They must include a daytime telephone number.

MAKING KNOCKANDO IS A BIT LIKE DOING THE TIMES CROSSWORD.

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY HOW LONG IT'S GOING TO TAKE.

How does a fine, single malt like Knockando come to be associated with The Times Crossword?

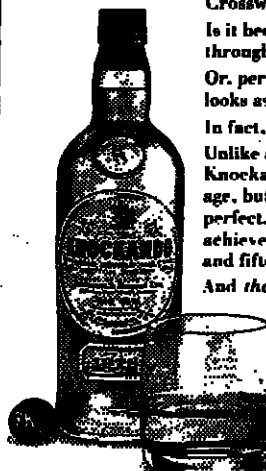
Is it because, like the Crossword, some get through it quicker than others? Or, perhaps, because the word Knockando looks as though it should be followed by "and"? In fact, it's none of these.

Unlike any other single malt whisky, Knockando is bottled not at a pre-determined age, but only when taste confirms that its perfect, subtly complex balance has been achieved. This can be anytime between twelve and fifteen years.

And that's why we felt it was the perfect partner for The Times Crossword. Because it's impossible to say how long it's going to take.

KNOCKANDO

SPONSOR OF THE TIMES CROSSWORD CHAMPIONSHIP



Taunton stewards suspend six riders for taking wrong course

Jockeys pay heavy penalty for error

By RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE six jockeys who took the wrong course around a dotted-off set of hurdles at Taunton yesterday were left counting the cost of the seven-day ban they each received for their unprecedented offence.

Tony McCoy, Mick Fitzgerald, Tom Dumble, Mark Richards, Guy Lewis and Emily Jones will miss some of the most valuable racing in the National Hunt calendar outside the Cheltenham Festival and the Grand National meeting at Aintree.

The ban comes into force tomorrow week, when Ascot

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: TRISQUARE (3.45 Ayr)
Next best: Campeche Bay (1.55 Cheltenham)

and Aintree stage important meetings. It will also cover the significant Peterborough Chase at Huntingdon and the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup at Newbury.

McCoy, who rode Little Hooligan, the first past the post, and holds the lead in the jockeys' championship table, was shocked after the punishment was meted out. "I can't believe it. I thought they would fine us. This could cost me the championship."

After representation from trainers and owners, a rule was introduced in June which allows horses to bypass blocked-off hurdles and fences after an accident. Previously, a race was automatically declared void in such circumstances.



Trade Wind and Procter clear the last flight on their way to victory in the Shoreditch Novices' Hurdle at Taunton yesterday

Although a notice in the Taunton jockeys' weighing room made clear which route jockeys should take, the riders were clearly at sixes and sevens as they approached the final flight in the Orchard Portman Selling Handicap Hurdle — and the resulting chaos infuriated the stewards.

William Nunneley, the stewards' secretary officiating at the track, explained: "The

stewards took a very strict view about this case. It was the first time since hurdles and fences have been dotted off that this has happened and there is a very clear instruction in the weighing room.

"Flagmen were doing their best to point them the correct way round the hurdles and Jamie Osborne clearly saw which way he was meant to go. Those who went the wrong

way nearly mowed down the amateur personnel and inconvenienced a lot of people.

"It is a miracle no one was hurt so the stewards took a strong view about their behaviour. The stewards felt all six were culpable and viewed it seriously because it caused a farce."

McCoy, who will miss riding Straight Talk in the Becher Chase at Aintree, complained

that the flagmen had contributed to the confusion near the final flight. "They didn't know which way they were pointing us. If anything it was towards the inside of the course."

However, Gordon Edwards, the trainer of Little Hooligan, reflected: "The stewards had no option but to disqualify my horse, because the chevrons on the dolls were

pointing the jockeys outside of the hurdle to the left."

Meanwhile, Roy Brotherton, the trainer of the winner, Safe Secret, could hardly believe his luck as his hurdler, who finished fifth, gained the first success of his career. I saw her disappear off the television screen and I wondered where Jamie Osborne had gone, but fair play to him, he got it right."

AYR

THUNDERER
12.30 HAZARD A Guess. 1.00 Lucman. 1.30 The Grey Monk. 2.05 Hit The Canvas. 2.40 Carson City. 3.15 Target Line. 3.45 Trisquare.

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating:
3.15 NODFORM WONDER.

GOING: GOOD SIS

12.30 GALLOWAY HILLS MAIDEN HURDLE

(Div 1: £2,400; 2m) (14 runners)
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1.00 LAGS NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE

(£2,421; 2m 110yd) (18)
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18 100-111 CROWN 277 (J) T. Dyer 11-10

1.30 GLENVIEW HIGHLAND MALT TAMEROSIA

SERIES (Novices chase; qualifier: £3,518; 2m) (8)
1 100-111 CROWN 277 (J) T. Dyer 11-10
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HUNTINGDON

THUNDERER
12.45 General Jackie. 1.15 Uluru. 1.45 Real Glee. 2.20 Wamdhia. 2.55 Clowstar Lady. 3.30 Killynny Cross. 4.00 Durshan.

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 3.30 Killynny Cross.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM SIS

12.45 EBF CHILDREN IN NEED NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE

(Qualifier: £2,110; 2m 110yd) (3 runners)
1 100-111 CROWN 277 (J) T. Dyer 11-10
2 100-111 CROWN 277 (J) T. Dyer 11-10
3 100-111 CROWN 277 (J) T. Dyer 11-10

1.15 BUSINESS CLUB HURDLE

(£2,609; 3m 2f) (5)
1 100-111 CROWN 277 (J) T. Dyer 11-10
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1.45 YESTERDAY'S LUGGAGE NOVICES CHASE

(£3,410; 2m 4f 110yd) (5)
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COURSE SPECIALISTS

Ayr
Huntingdon
Lingfield Park

THUNDERER
12.45 General Jackie. 1.15 Uluru. 1.45 Real Glee. 2.20 Wamdhia. 2.55 Clowstar Lady. 3.30 Killynny Cross. 4.00 Durshan.

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 3.30 Killynny Cross.

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2.05 JOAN MACKAY HANDICAP HURDLE

(£3,453; 3m 110yd) (8)
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2.40 FIVEWAYS NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE

(£2,801; 2m 4f) (8)
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3.15 MOSSBLOWN CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS

SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,625; 2m 4f) (8)
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3.45 GALLOWAY HILLS MAIDEN HURDLE

(Div 1: £2,390; 2m) (14)
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Day of lost opportunities for Pakistan ends with honours even

Injury to Malik enlivens proceedings

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON
IN BRISBANE

AS THEY say in war-torn cities and other pockets of civil disturbance, things were returning to normal here last night. The first day of the first Test match between Australia and Pakistan passed off peacefully without any flashpoints, as people went about their business unchallenged. That alone represents an advance.

Australia, who won the toss, lost four wickets in making 262. If Mark Taylor, the Australia captain and one of three men to pass fifty, was unhappy that nobody went on to make a big score, he will note that Pakistan, whose fielders put down five chances, endured a less satisfactory day in the merciless heat.

Indeed, they are almost a player short already, and the fact that the casualty is Salim Malik, Australia's Public Enemy No.1, was lost on nobody.

Malik left the field after holding the catch that ended Taylor's innings on 69 midway through the afternoon, and did not return. Taylor pulled Saqlain Mushtaq, the young off spinner, hard to mid-wicket, where Malik dived to intercept two-handed and immediately tried to have six stitches inserted in the ruptured webbing of his left hand.

Intikhab Alam, the Pakistan manager, confirmed later that the wound would take about a week to heal properly, but that Malik would bat in this match. "The stitches will be in place for seven or eight days and the cut could reopen," Intikhab said. "He is very disappointed, but he is willing to bat [probably at No.6]. Malik's reappearance in the middle will be greeted with disdain on the hill."

Intikhab, rueing his team's inability to hold on to those chances, admitted that fielding was "the weakest point we have. It is something we must work on". Otherwise, he said, Pakistan had bowled well on a good batting pitch and ended the day almost level. That assessment is fair enough. Pakistan bowled straight and, those misses apart, did not wilt on a day of searing heat.

Wasim Akram, who began the day with an excellent, unrewarded spell, shared the wickets with Saqlain. Is, who



Elahi moves to his left to dismiss Mark Waugh off the bowling of Saqlain during the first Test in Brisbane yesterday. Photograph: David Gray

bowled 31 overs with a maturity beyond his years. He turned the ball, although there was no sign of the freakish spinner that goes the other way, supposedly flicked out by the middle finger the way that John Gleeson used to do 30 years ago for Australia.

Mark Waugh was having none of such tricks, advancing down the pitch to drive sixes over mid-on and mid-off.

The morning was Test cricket at its most unyielding. Taylor needed all of eight overs to get off the mark and he was beaten three times by Wasim outside the off stump. He still went to 50 in 95 balls with nine boundaries and an all-run four, skipping past Slater, who was missed on 12, 15 and 19. The first chance, to Malik at square leg, was hard.

The others, to Elahi in the gully, and Ramiz Raja at second slip, should have been snaffled without a thought.

SCOREBOARD

AUSTRALIA: First Innings	
M A Taylor c Salim b Saqlain	69
M J Slater c Mohammad b Wasim	42
D C Boon c Mohammad b Wasim	54
M E Waugh c Elahi b Saqlain	59
S R Waugh not out	24
S S Stevens not out	0
Extras (b 1, lb 1, nb 0)	14
Total (4 wickets)	262
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-107, 2-119, 3-213, 4-252	
PAKISTAN: Amir Sobah, Salim Elahi, Ramiz Raja, Intikhab Alam, Saqlain Mushtaq, Wasim Akram, Saqlain Mushtaq, Waqar Younis, Mohammad Akram	
Umpires: S Randell and K Liebenberg (SA)	

when Slater was let off, there was a justice of sorts that he took the catch.

Boon, in need of a decent score to confirm his right to the No.3 spot, knuckled down as Mark Waugh played more freely. Waugh hit seven boundaries on his way to fifty, as well as those two lofted strokes for six, and he, too, benefited from a miss when Saqlain dropped a return chance.

It was not a costly error, for Waugh was taken shortly after at silly point, when Karl Liebenberg, the South African umpire, ruled that the ball had brushed a glove after first hitting the pad.

When the new ball was taken, Wasim had Boon caught at slip and could also have removed Steve Waugh, who drove a difficult return chance. If Pakistan take his wicket early today, they will still be in the hunt.

New Zealand dogged by continued rain

CYCLONIC rains forced play to be abandoned on the second day of the third and final Test match between India and New Zealand in Cuttack yesterday.

The groundstaff said play might not be possible on the third day today as the outfield had been submerged under a sheet of water. Heavy rain disrupted play on the first day when India struggled to 120 for three.

India lead the series 1-0 after having won the first Test at Bangalore. The second Test in Madras was ruined by rain.

England A play a hastily arranged 40-over match against the Gymkhana Club in Lahore as preparation for the second four-day match of their tour of Pakistan, against

a Cricket Board XI, which starts tomorrow on the same ground.

Mike Smith, the Gloucestershire left-arm seam bowler, is ruled out by a rib injury and Ian Salisbury and Ed Giddins, the Sussex players, are rested.

Craig White, the Yorkshire all-rounder, who has been nursing a chipped thumb sustained in the opening one-day match, will play, mainly for bowling practice.

Nottinghamshire have signed Chris Tolley, 27, the former Worcestershire all-rounder, on a two-year contract.

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Hawkeye and the hellhounds

Classic Serial: The Last of the Mohicans. Radio 4, 2.00pm.
David Calcutt's two-part serialisation of J. Fenimore Cooper's adventure story about good Britons, bad Frenchmen, and good and bad Redskins recalls one of the wisest decisions in literary history. Wouldn't the book have lost two-thirds of its power to grip if its scouting hero, Hawkeye, had clung to his baptismal name of Natty Bumppo? Where is the *frisson* in "Natty Bumppo, hammer of the scalp-collecting Huns"? Calcutt has done something unusual, if not entirely successful, with the book's text. He constantly changes the viewpoints, dividing up the narration between the main characters. He has also given Hawkeye a defiant cry that, as I remember it, is not in the book: "Come on, you bloody-minded hellhounds!"

Dreamsongs. Radio 3, 4.30pm.
To the Australian entertainer Rolf Harris I owe what little I know about traditional Aboriginal instruments. Thanks to its name, the tubular didgeridoo is always good for a laugh. The second of the Australian poet Les Murray's programmes about Aboriginal music wiped the grin off my face. Playing the didgeridoo, he explains, is a way of communicating with the spirit world, and forms part of the ceremonial connected with the process of purification after death. Using few words to convey much meaning, Murray gives a fascinating insight into the roles that instruments and chanting play in the ancestor-pivoted rituals of the Aborigines. Peter Daville

RADIO 1	WORLD SERVICE
FM Stereo. 6.00am. <i>Adam & Eve</i> with the <i>Early Breakfast Show</i> . 8.00. <i>Chris Evans</i> . 9.00. <i>Simon Mayo</i> , including at 9.00 the <i>Golden Hour</i> . 12.00. <i>Lisa Ashton</i> , including at 12.30-12.45 <i>Newsbeat</i> and at 1.15 <i>The Net</i> . 2.00. <i>Nicky Campbell</i> . 4.00. <i>Mark Goodier</i> at 5.30-5.45 <i>Newsbeat</i> , and at 6.15 <i>The Net</i> . 7.00. <i>The Essential Selection</i> . 10.00. <i>John Peel</i> . 1.00. <i>Radio 1 Rap Show</i> .	All times in GMT. 5.00am. <i>Newsday</i> . 5.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 6.00. <i>Newsday</i> . 6.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 7.00. <i>Newsday</i> . 7.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 8.00. <i>Newsday</i> . 8.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 9.00. <i>Newsday</i> . 9.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 10.00. <i>Newsday</i> . 10.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 11.00. <i>Newsday</i> . 11.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 12.00. <i>Newsday</i> . 12.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 1.00. <i>Newsday</i> . 1.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 2.00. <i>Newsday</i> . 2.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 3.00. <i>Europe Today</i> . 3.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 4.00. <i>Europe Today</i> . 4.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 5.00. <i>Europe Today</i> . 5.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 6.00. <i>Europe Today</i> . 6.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 7.00. <i>Europe Today</i> . 7.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 8.00. <i>Europe Today</i> . 8.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 9.00. <i>Europe Today</i> . 9.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 10.00. <i>Europe Today</i> . 10.30. <i>Europe Today</i> . 11.00. 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All at sea amid hard hats and helicopters

I am sure, nay positive, that I watched most of the first series of *Roughnecks* (BBC1) last year. If pressed, I would even say I rather enjoyed it — all those hard hats and helicopters, great stuff. But ask me what happened and... nothing. The darkness descends.

Which is where it stayed for the rest of the "previously on *Roughnecks*" sequence at the beginning of last night's opening episode to series two. Who were all these people?

True, there was something familiar about someone called Tom. I recognise that moustache anywhere — given enough time. But what about all the others? Someone I didn't recognise at all surfaced on a storm-tossed North Sea to shout "Where's Ian?" Never mind where Ian, who's Ian?

Ian, I eventually deduced, was no more, the sole fatality of a helicopter crash at the end of the

last series. But his death was still recently felt by this mystery cast of thousands. "You're not a survivor till you've survived," shouted my new friend Tom, at someone I still couldn't quite place. You couldn't be placed with faces, as someone at the BBC had realised. Not only does the current *Roughnecks* have a cut-out-and-keep guide to the crew of the Osprey Explorer, but all 15 principal characters are credited at the beginning as well as the end of the programme. I read another note — 15 characters, 50 minutes running time — and suddenly it all came rushing back.

The reason I can't remember what happened in the last series is that at three and a bit minutes per character almost everyone is reduced to walk-on status and the plot to the almost infinite number of variations in which the 15 characters can be fleetingly com-

bined. It has refreshing pace, it has tremendous style, but it can make it difficult to keep tabs on what's going on.

Last night's episode began with someone important called Drew, who didn't appear in either my *Radio Times* guide or the opening titles. Clearly then he was telling Tessa (who thankfully did) the truth when he said he was off. But not before he'd put the wind up the rig's middle management: "Once this job's done, we don't have a contract to drill teeth."

By the close, drilling teeth was the least of their problems. The Osprey Explorer had apparently been taken over by a bunch of machine-gunning terrorists, a plot borrowed from umpteen paperbacks and better kept for a Christmas special, when disbelief tends to be more generously suspended. All may yet not be what it seems, I know, but on a

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

cold November night and after 15 new faces, I'm just hoping for one thing — they keep their balacavas on.

On a cold November night and two episodes into the new *Taggart* (ITV), I'm hoping for one more thing — that wherever he is Mark McManus isn't watching. He would weep at the sight of *Taggart* being played for laughs.

The series has never been short

of humour and last night there were still glimpses of the dry, sardonic style of old. "Not normally the sort of thing we do when the sun is shining," said McVie brightly, as he and Jardine trotted off to exhume the long-dead lead singer of the Adders.

But DC Fraser — fast emerging as Glasgow's answer to Forrest Gump — and his lunch at the Hilton Hotel was too curiously on the slapstick top. He shook hands with the head waiter, charmed to fellow diners as he passed ("that looks good") and then accompanied lobster salad with... orange squash. By comparison, McVie bobbing along in time to the Adders was almost forgivable. Almost.

The blame for all this must be shared between Alan Macmillan, the director, who has failed to keep a curb on Colin McCredie's initially engaging but now wearying portrayal of Fraser, and Barry

Appleton, whose script parted company with reality long ago. Any plot that hinges on anonymous notes written by a bisexual antique dealer who once had a lesbian affair with a rock star does not need something stronger than orange squash.

Duly fortified, the evening concluded with a choice of two new documentary series, *Redcaps* (BBC2) and *Doctors in the Dock* (BBC2). The former suffered from following hot on the heels of *In the Company of Men* and from having absolutely nothing new to reveal about life in the Army. Soldiers shouting at other soldiers — been there, done it, got the remote control.

By contrast, *Doctors in the Dock* was breaking watchable new ground, by giving doctors who have been either struck off or seriously disciplined the chance to put their side of the case. The risk

was that it would turn into a medical version of *Rough Justice*, instantly having us marvelling at the clinical injustice of it all and clamouring for the reinstatement of every doctor who appeared.

The reality, at least for this first programme, was very different as it examined the case of Nicholas Siddle, a consultant gynaecologist who was struck off this summer after a series of botched keyhole surgery operations. By the time Dr Siddle walked out of a darkened operating theatre for the final time, it was difficult to come to any conclusion other than that the General Medical Council had been quite right to bring his surgical career to a close. To err is human but to forgive such a catalogue of mistakes, not to mention the apparent lack of genuine repentance... well, that really is best left to the Divine.

● Lynne Truss is on holiday

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (74942)

7.00 BBC Breakfast News (94771855)

9.10 Killy (s) (4304923)

10.00 News (Ceefax), regional news and weather (5831774) **10.05 Housemates** Domestic quiz with Tim Vine (s) (5489297)

10.35 Good Morning with Anne and Nick (s) Including at 11.00 News (Ceefax) (4343590)

12.00pm News (Ceefax), and weather (9763126) **12.05 Pebble Mill** Tanya Wong talks about Children in Need (s) (4992774) **12.50 Regional news** and weather (23536126)

1.00 One O'Clock News (Ceefax) (46010)

1.30 Neighbours (Ceefax) (s) (92929213)

1.50 Columbo: Try and Catch Me (r) (Ceefax) (3901958) **2.05 Incongruity** (s) (1167038)

3.30 Orville and Cuddles (r) (8058749) **3.35 Robinson Suerore** (Ceefax) (s) (5381039) **4.00 The Itsy Bitsy Spider** (s) (8370107) **4.20 Julia-Jekyll and Harriet Hyde** (Ceefax) (s) (2355119) **4.35 Record Breakers** (Ceefax) (s) (1912213) **5.00 Newsround** (Ceefax) (8014519)

5.10 Blue Peter (Ceefax) (s) (5520702)

5.35 Neighbours (r) (Ceefax) (s) (733478)

6.00 Six O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (107)

6.30 Regional news magazines (687)

7.00 Wipeout with Paul Daniels (3652)

7.30 Tomorrow's World (Ceefax) (s) (871)

8.00 999 Lifesavers Dramatic reconstructions of real-life rescues. Michael Barker and Juliet Morris present the stories of a windsurfer who drifted out to sea, and of a young boy who was saved by his neighbour. (Ceefax) (s) (2300)

8.30 A Question of Sport Team captain Ian Botham is joined by athletes Kelly Holmes and England rugby union international Brian Moore, while Nottingham Forest captain Stuart Pearce and Olympic rower Steve Redgrave make up Bill Beaumont's team. David Coleman asks the questions (8107)

9.00 Nine O'Clock News (Ceefax), regional news and weather (7403)

9.30 Dangerfield Nigel Le Valliant as the GP-cum-police surgeon. An SAS man is found dead in a shallow grave. (Ceefax) (s) (231720)

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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 10 1995

Young batsmen take centre stage as England attack labours

Malcolm fluffs his lines in Test rehearsal

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN KIMBERLEY

KIMBERLEY (first day of four: South Africa A won toss; South Africa A have scored 325 for five wickets against an England XI)

THE frustration of England's early cricket on this tour has been the suspicion that they have only played poor teams on poor pitches. Michael Atherton said he wanted something more competitive from the last of the warm-up games but yesterday's events at the Kimberley Country Club were not quite what the captain had in mind.

It was deflating enough to discover that the pitch, for this four-day fixture against South Africa A, was prepared by a former Derbyshire spin bowler, Fred Swarbrook, with the needs of a current Derbyshire fast bowler, Devon Malcolm, very far from his priorities.

It was stubbornly slow, as have been all the pitches encountered by the touring team so far, and combined with some of the brightest young batsmen in South Africa, to neuter the England pace attack.

To say Malcolm bowled better late in the day was to damn him with faint praise. He bowled wretchedly before lunch and still worse afterwards, by which time his first ten overs of a game designed to eradicate all doubts over his Test place had yielded 55 runs and proved nothing but the unaltered moodiness of his bowling.

He could not blame the pitch for his absence of rhythm. No-balls were common and more than once he aborted his run-up in the delivery stride. His direction was eccentric and he persistently fell away in his follow-through.

Raymond Illingworth, the tour manager, chafed and chuntered as he watched it all from the press box and the bowling coach, Peter Lever, whose stated mission in his month out here was to smooth

out some of the more obvious wrinkles in Malcolm's action, must have wondered if his journey was worthwhile. Management efforts to redirect and motivate Malcolm are not being helped by the adulation he routinely receives everywhere he goes.

Most people in this country can recite his nine-wicket analysis at the Oval last year, and many do so, but fewer are aware that his Test wickets have cost almost 37 runs each and that the bad days have heavily outnumbered the good. Illingworth knows it, though, and after yesterday's disappointments, it may yet cost Malcolm dear when the

SCOREBOARD

SOUTH AFRICA A: First Innings
P J P Steyn c Thorpe b Gough 17
A M Bacher c Watkinson b Gough 116
J H Kallis b Gough 93
J B Commins c Russell b Fraser 27
L J Watkinson c Thorpe b Malcolm 16
L J Pienaar not out 19
S J Pienaar not out 12
Extras (b 12, w 2, nb 11) 25
Total (5 wickets) 325
N Bone, S D Jack, R Telemachus and P Adams to bat
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-33, 2-214, 3-261, 4-290, 5-294
BOWLING: Malcolm 16-1-70-1, Gough 21-3-59-2, Fraser 19-3-65-1, Watkinson 25-5-59-0, Thorpe 4-1-15-0, Hick 8-2-14-1, Ramprakash 6-1-11-0
ENGLAND: M A Atherton, A J Stewart, M R Ramprakash, G P Thorpe, G A Hick, R A Smith, R C Russell, M Watkinson, D Gough, A R C Fraser, D E Malcott
Umpires: D Orchard and R Hoerzen

series begins at Centurion Park, Verwoerdburg next week.

If the heady expectations of the South African administration are not to look foolish, it will begin in an atmosphere markedly different to yesterday's. Kimberley is not an intoxicating place, its claims to fame restricted to diamond mines and drive-in pubs, but the population managed to resist the attractions of the cricket and, doubtless, cheered when the recent drought was interrupted by a thunderstorm just before lunch.

Those few who were present included the South Africa coach, Bob Woolmer, who said that he has discounted Fanie de Villiers from the Test series due to the hamstring injury that makes it difficult for him even to drive his car. Woolmer then went into conference with his successor as Warwickshire coach, Phil Neale, who has arrived with a blank contract to fill for the county's new overseas player.

Woolmer could not help but be impressed by Jacques Kallis, 20 only last month but close to a Test debut unless Jonny Rhodes rediscovered his form. Stylish and unhurried, he played with the full face of the bat to make 93 in three hours and threw away a century by sweeping at the off spin of Graeme Hick.

Adam Bacher, nephew of the esteemed and ubiquitous Ali, was neither so compelling nor so careless, completing his first senior century after a second-wicket stand of 181.

The ball turned appreciably off bare patches at each end, as Jack Russell discovered to his cost. With Kallis on 78, Watkinson stranded him with a ball that spun and bounced but Russell failed to get a glove on the stumping chance. On a hot and unrewarding afternoon, this was a low point for England but, in truth, the day provided few highs.

Darren Gough, who strained too hard with the new ball, bowled far better at lesser pace in subsequent spells and the ability of both Gough and Dominic Cork to swing the old ball could be critical to England's prospects when the serious business begins.

Gough's one early wicket came from a ball that did not deserve it, but a shot that did, and he later lured Bacher into his unsuitable leg-side trap as he hooked to the squarer of two long legs. It was probably as well, given the tone of the day, that it did not carry to the man set finer, for he was Malcolm.

Test honours even, page 46



Gough yells a vain appeal for leg-before against Bacher, who scored a century

ICE SKATING 43

FORMER CHAMPION
REFUSES TO
LOOSEN HER GRIP

Manager gives notice after latest French revolution

FROM DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT IN TOULOUSE

THE row that has simmered gently between French rugby union players and their federation since the decision — taken in Paris — that the sport should go open, exploded here yesterday some 48 hours before the first international in the two-match series against New Zealand.

The France squad decided to boycott a civic reception in the city centre and, in response, André Herrero, their manager for a mere two months, is to resign. He will stand down after the match tomorrow and formally offer his resignation to the French federation at its meeting in Paris next Friday.

Nor is he going quietly. Herrero, 57 and a respected figure as an international player (22 caps between 1963 and 1967 as a back-five forward), club coach, and president of Toulouse, has accused his players of acting like schoolboys and the federation of failing to clarify the financial arrangements for its international squad.

"This group [of players] is egotistical and is not representative of the state of mind of French rugby," he said. "The French federation has given them considerable advantages, acknowledging their status, but the federation must clear, rigorously and honestly, the problems which are dividing it. We need to avoid the deviations which are not good for the image of the sport."

Obviously, the dispute centres around the three international players — Olivier Roumat, Thierry Lacroix and Laurent Cabannes — who stayed in South Africa after the World Cup to play provincial rugby. Bernard Lapasset, the president of the French federation, decided that, because they did not return to France until mid-October, they should not be eligible for the international tomorrow.

Twice, the French squad wrote asking for that decision to be reversed — during the Latin Cup, in Argentina, and last week, during fitness testing in Bordeaux. They believed that they would be heard, only to find that they were not. That, allied to disputes over the payment of certain match fees and the independent rumblings of the

senior clubs, created the firestorm yesterday.

Philippe Saint-André, the captain, and Laurent Bénézech and Emile N'Tamack, the players' representatives, were supported unanimously when they demanded a public gesture of dissent. "We are going to watch videos of the All Blacks in our hotel and prepare for this historic match — the first full international between professionals," Saint-André said, heedless of the federation's claim, in September, that French rugby remains amateur.

"We are sick of certain things the federation is doing without telling us," Bénézech added. "We only learn about them in the newspapers." A reduction in their ticket allo-



Saint-André watching brief

tion for the match tomorrow only fuelled the flames for the new-look France squad.

The future of other management figures must also be in the balance. Herrero took over when Guy Laporte was dismissed, after the World Cup, and Jean-Claude Skrela replaced Pierre Berbizier as coach at the same time.

"I agree in principle with the protest, but this is not the right time — it's so stupid," Herrero said. "To act like this two days before an international is totally unjustified."

NEW ZEALAND: J Wilson, E Rush, F Bunce, W Little, J Lomu, S Cuthbert, S Forster, C Dowd, S Fitzpatrick, O Brown, B Janion, I Jones, R Brooks, M Jones, Brooks, Rieckmann, J Marshall, A Swales, G Osborne, T Blackadder, R Lee, H Hewitt.

Gerald Davies, page 43
England's new deal, page 43

Arsenal withdraw interest in Ince

BY PETER BALL

PAUL INCE has returned to Italy with his future still in doubt. Arsenal withdrew their interest in a transfer yesterday, though sources at the FA Carling Premiership football club suggested that they might renew it. Newcastle United, meanwhile, lead a group of three or four clubs holding a watching brief.

"We have had no further discussions about Paul Ince," a spokesman for Internazionale, his Italian club, said. "The only noises are coming from England. We have not fixed an official price — we have been too busy dealing with incoming transfers."

The first of those, Calo, the Brazilian striker, cost £3 million from São Paulo, the transfer going through before the Italian deadline last night. The signing of another overseas player may make Ince's departure more likely, although Roy Hodgson, the new Inter coach, reaffirmed

that he was happy for Ince to stay. "He is not a player I would want to lose," Hodgson said.

Arsenal's volte-face, announced by Peter Hill-Wood, the chairman, took even senior club officials by surprise. Ince's salary expectations of around £25,000 a week are believed to be at the root of the decision. Arsenal are the only English

Graham has explained 42
Testing times for Runcorn 42

club to have made a firm bid. Terry McDermott, the Newcastle assistant manager, described reports that they had bid £7 million as "garbage".

Newcastle did sign Darren Huckerby, 19, the Lincoln City striker, for £500,000. It represents a move of 91 places up the league for the player and a welcome infusion of cash for the impecunious

Endsleigh Insurance League third division club. "We are confident that he can bridge the gap," Kevin Keegan, the Newcastle manager, said.

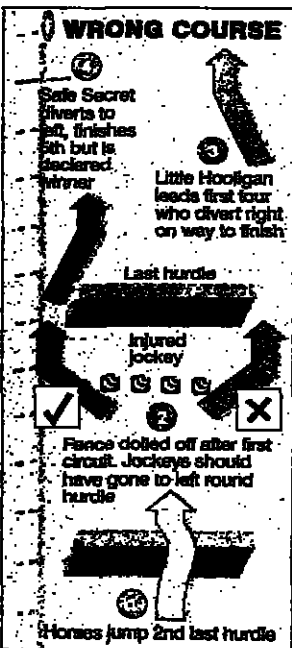
Like Ince, Terry Phelan's future was still in doubt last night, even though Manchester City cut their asking price to £750,000 in an attempt to facilitate his transfer to Chelsea. The full back had passed his medical, but he returned to Manchester to attempt to sort out a severance agreement with City.

"I have agreed terms with Chelsea, but I haven't signed anything," Phelan said. "City haven't paid the money due to me under my contract, which still has over two years to run. I am extremely frustrated by the situation and I will talk to City in the morning to try to sort it out."

Chelsea are unwilling to be patient. "The ball is back in City's court," Colin Hutchinson, the Chelsea managing director, said. "If this problem can't be sorted out quickly, the deal is off."

Six banned for riding wrong way

BY RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT



SIX jockeys were each banned for seven days at Taunton yesterday after they rode the wrong side of a blocked-off hurdle. The riders ignored the course rules and flag-waving groundstaff who tried to point them in the right direction at the final flight of the Orchard Portman Selling Handicap Hurdle.

Although Little Hooligan, the 5-2 favourite, was first past the winning post, he was disqualified along with the horses that finished second, third, fourth, sixth and seventh. The official winner was Safe Secret, ridden by Jamie Osborne, who had finished fifth, beaten by more than 18 lengths. Faz, originally eighth, was promoted to runner-up.

The drama unfolded at the picturesque Somerset course as ten horses and riders

approached the last of nine flights of hurdles. However, because there had been two fallers at the flight on the previous circuit, and one jockey, Michael Clarke, was still on the ground, the hurdle was dolted off.

Brightly-coloured chevrons on the top of the hurdle pointed riders towards the correct path, on the stands side of the flight, and served to reinforce a notice in the jockeys' weighing-room which stated: "All fences and hurdles will be by-passed on the left when necessary."

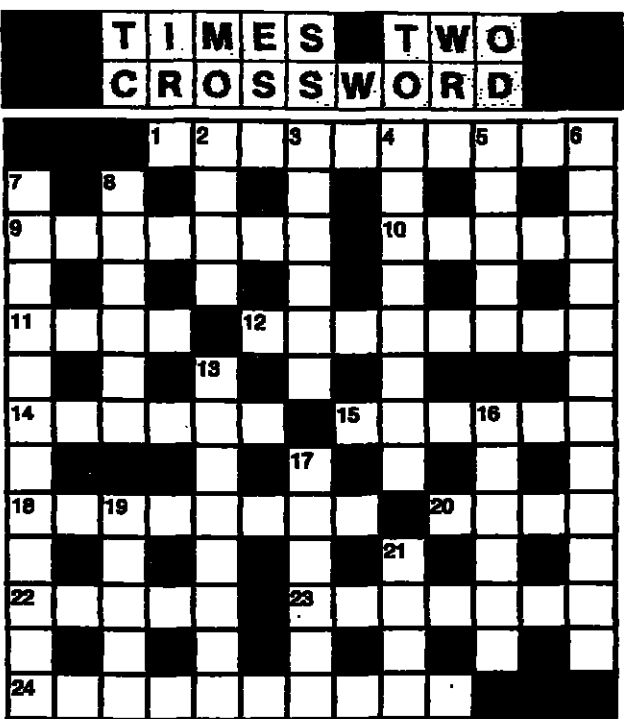
However, when the runners approached the hurdle, they veered away from the stands towards the inside of the course and passed the hurdle on the right-hand side.

Tom Dascombe, on Northern Singer, Mark Richards, on Killing Time, and Tony

McCoy, on Little Hooligan, followed the lead set by Guy Lewis, on Tony's Mist. Although Osborne went the correct side, Emily Jones, on Marmalade, and Mick Fitzgerald, on Rainbow Walk, also went the wrong way.

McCoy, rider of the original "winner", was seething as he realised the implications of the ban. "It could cost me the championship," the leading jockey said.

Counting the cost, page 45



No 623

- ACROSS**
- William —, Scottish poetaster (10)
 - Straight ahead (7)
 - Carry here (5)
 - Give out (4)
 - Strict disciplinarian (8)
 - Skin marking; military display (6)
 - A fastening peg (6)
 - Junior barristers (5,3)
 - Rough edge; way of sounding (7,4)
 - To null; onerous routine (5)
 - Prickly plant, eg blackberry (7)
 - Napoleon's foreign minister (10)
- DOWN**
- Hook on (bird's) toe (4)
 - Harrowing experience (6)
 - Desire to succeed (8)
 - Foreign, unusual (5)
 - Carefree, unserious (5-7)
 - Later idea (12)
 - Skilled painter (6)
 - Breakfast food; prison term (8)
 - Not very clean (6)
 - Curved centre of road (6)
 - Fabric, parallel diagonal lines (5)
 - Long story; strand (4)

The solution to 622 will be published Wednesday, November 15

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